

One Watershed, One Plan Minnesota River - Mankato	Policy Committee Planning Meeting #2	Date: April 8, 2024
		Time: 3:00pm
		Location: Saint Peter Community Center: 600 South 5th Street, St. Peter, MN 56082 [Senior Center Room]

Facilitator:	Marie Dranttel	Note taker: Crystal Madden
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Invitees:	Policy Committee: Nicollet County: Kurt Zins, Marie Dranttel; Nicollet County S.W.C.D.: Don Hermanson and Eric Annexstad; Blue Earth County: Kevin Paap, Kip Bruender; Blue Earth County S.W.C.D.: Jacob Quade, Chris Hughes; Le Sueur County: Steven “Gump” Rohlfing, David Preisler; Le Sueur County S.W.C.D.: Earle Traxler, Pete Thelemann; City of North Mankato: Kevin McCann and Scott Carlson; City of Mankato: Mike Laven, Jenn Melby-Kelley; City of Lake Crystal: Gina Cooper, Brett Hanson; City of Saint Peter: Dustin Sharstrom, Ben Ranft; B.W.S.R.: Jeremy Maul
	Steering Team: Nicollet: Kenny Famakinwa, Crystal Madden; Nicollet County S.W.C.D.: Blake Honetshschlag; Blue Earth County: Scott Salisbury; Blue Earth County S.W.C.D.: Jerad Bach; Le Sueur County: Holly Bushman; Le Sueur County S.W.C.D.: Schultz, Michael; City of North Mankato: Luke Arnold; City of Mankato: Jeff Johnson; City of Lake Crystal: Angela M. Grafstrom; City of Saint Peter: Curtis Thompson

Pre-work:

Please bring:

Agenda Items

Topic	Purpose	Lead	Time allotted
✓ Approve agenda	INFO	Chair	5 min.
✓ Approve minutes	DECISION	Chair	5 min.
✓ Planning Grant and Grant Agreement Update ✓ Request for Qualification Update	DISCUSSION	Chair	25 min.
✓ Consultant Interview Group Update ✓ Consultant Interview Questions	DISCUSSION	Chair	40 min.
Break			
✓ 60 Day Notice ○ Intent to plan update	DISCUSSION	Chair	5 min.
✓ Advisory Committee Member List	DISCUSSION	Chair	15 min.
✓ Strategies for inviting stakeholders ✓ Kick-Off Meeting Locations	DISCUSSION	Chair	15 min.
✓ Schedule next meeting	DECISION	Chai	5 min.

One Watershed, One Plan: Minnesota River – Mankato

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 26, 2024

The One Watershed, One Plan: Minnesota River – Mankato Policy Committee met at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, February 26, 2024 at the Nicollet County Government Center. Present at the meeting for Nicollet County: Kenny Famakinwa, Kurt Zins, Marie Dranttel, and Crystal Madden; Nicollet County S.W.C.D.: Don Hermanson and Eric Annexstad; City of North Mankato: Kevin McCann and Scott Carlson; City of Mankato: Mike Laven; Blue Earth County: Scott Salsbury and Kevin Paap; Blue Earth County S.W.C.D.: Jacob Quade; Le Sueur County: Steven “Gump” Rohlfing; City of Lake Crystal: Gina Cooper; B.W.S.R.: Jeremy Maul and Julie Westerlund.

Appointment of Temporary Chair

A motion was made, and seconded, electing Marie Dranttel as Temporary Chair of the meeting. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Meeting Agenda and Policy Committee Member Expectations

The meeting agenda was reviewed, and the Policy Committee Ground Rules and Expectations were agreed upon.

Policy Committee Ground Rules and Expectations

In addition to following the requirements of the Memorandum of Agreement and bylaws, Policy Committee Members will:

1. Actively prepare for, attend, and participate in all scheduled meetings of the Policy Committee.
2. Actively engage in the decision-making process for watershed-based planning with the understanding that goals, objectives, and action items of the water plan must be prioritized, targeted, and measurable.
3. Initiate and/or assist with providing opportunities for constituents to be appraised of updated progress of the watershed-based planning process.
4. Regularly update their respective Boards on the progress of the watershed planning process.
5. Utilize the technical resources of their respective entities to assist and inform their decisions in the water planning process.

Policy Committee Meeting Schedule

Committee members discussed and agreed upon a monthly meeting, occurring at 3:00 p.m. on the second Monday of the month, for future Policy Committee meetings. The meeting’s expected duration is two (2) hours. The next meeting will occur on Monday, March 11th and will be held at the Nicollet County Government Center – in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). A request was made by members that future meetings to be shared over Zoom for administrative support staff to listen in.

Review and adopt Policy Committee By-Laws

A motion was made, and seconded, to adopt the Policy Committee By-Laws as recommended by the Steering Team. Motion carried with all voting in favor.

Appoint Chair and Officers

A motion was made, and seconded, to appoint Marie Dranttel as the Policy Committee Chair. Motion carried with all voting in favor. A motion was made, and seconded, to appoint Mike Laven as the Policy Committee Vice Chair. Motion carried with all voting in favor. A motion was made, and seconded, to appoint Gump Rohlfing as the meeting Secretary. Motion carried with all in favor.

Overview of One Watershed, One Plan

Julie Westerlund with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) presented a historic and current overview of the One Watershed, One Plan programming, and referenced *Minnesota State Statute Section 103B.801 – Comprehensive Watershed Management Planning Program* as the basis of the program's standards. Westerlund encouraged committee members visit the BWSR One Watershed, One Plan website to review additional program training resources found here: bwsr.state.mn.us/one-watershed-one-plan-videos. Westerlund spoke about planning funding, potential bi-annual funding amounts once the program is implemented, agency interactions, program timelines, and answered committee questions.

Agency Notification & Kick-Off Meeting

A discussion took place concerning agency plan review notification, and program feedback. Notification will be sent to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health, as well as the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It was decided that the following additional agencies will be included in the agency notification: Brown County & SWCD; Renville County & SWCD; Sibley County & SWCD; and Watonwan County & SWCD. Once noticed, agencies are allowed sixty (60) days to provide comment. A public Kick-Off Meeting may be scheduled once the 60-day notice period for agency response has ended.

It was decided that the public Kick-Off Meeting particulars would be discussed at a future meeting. The Kick-Off Meeting is meant gain feedback from the public, agencies, and special interest groups, which projects they would like to see given priority. Feedback will be used to establish a shared vision and specific goals. It was suggested that only one kick-off meeting take place. Agencies interested in hosting additional informational meetings more specific to their areas or watershed concerns are welcome to schedule additional meetings themselves.

An online survey may be sent out to receive public comment from citizens unable to make the meeting.

Review & Approve Process for Hiring Consultant

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) was reviewed and edits were made to the RFQ Schedule.

An advisory subcommittee consisting of one county member, one city member, and one SWCD member from both the Policy Committee and the Steering Team will view consultant presentations and proposals. This subcommittee will provide a recommendation to the Policy Committee, who will then review and negotiate the consultant's contract. The Policy Committee will submit their recommendation and contract to the Nicollet County Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Lastly, Nicollet County must approve and submit the signed Grant Agreement to BWSR. The consultant may be hired once the grant funding is approved and available to Nicollet County.

Next Steps

Policy Committee members are to gain the approval of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) by their respective boards. Nicollet County will submit the final MOA along with the work plan and budget to BWSR for review and grant approval. The Steering Team is allowed to reach out to consultants using the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in the meantime.

The final copy of the Policy Committee By-Laws document will be provided to the Chair for signature at the next Policy Committee meeting on March 11, 2024.

A suggestion was made to consider creating a Joint Powers Committee in the future, which will allow representatives to make decisions on behalf of their respective boards.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

**MARIE DRANTTEL, Policy Committee
Chair
1W1P MN River – Mankato**

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Minnesota River - Mankato WATERSHED PLANNING PARTNERSHIP Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (One Watershed, One Plan)

ISSUE DATE: Friday, March 22nd, 2024

RFQ DEADLINE: Friday, April 26th, 2024

Overview

The Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed, One Watershed, One Plan Partnership (MRMW Partnership) wishes to enter into an agreement with a consulting firm for the development of a ten-year One Watershed, One Plan (Plan), also known as a comprehensive watershed management plan, in accordance with [Minnesota Statutes § 103B.801](#). The MRMW Partnership includes the counties and soil and water conservation districts of Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Blue Earth. The City of Lake Crystal, City of North Mankato, City of Mankato, and City of Saint Peter.

The selected consulting firm (Consultant) will be working with local units of government, state agencies, citizens, and citizen-led organizations. The Consultant must be highly skilled in project management; gathering citizen input; GIS mapping and analysis; compiling existing plan information; organizing plan information; the use and interpretation of hydrologic, hydraulic and water quality modeling results; land use controls; resource planning; watershed restoration; flood damage reduction; water quality; best management practices; capital improvements programs; facilitation; technical writing and documenting source information. The successful Consultant will deliver a Plan that provides the following:

- Demonstrates that the MRMW Partnership and Consultant listened to input and credibly responded in the Plan development process;
- Incorporates input from the public and stakeholder organizations.
- Prioritizes the resources that will be targeted and describes what the MRMW Partnership will accomplish in terms of goals and responsibilities;
- Shows the mapped locations of both restoration and protection resources;
- Identifies the components of the MRMW Partnership's implementation program consistent with the Plan Content Requirements for One Watershed, One Plan and demonstrates that the Plan is focused on the prioritized resources;
- Identifies the general number of projects and programs that are needed to achieve the measurable goals established by the Partnership;
- Allows for the identification and tracking of the measurable goals (numeric);
- Provides quantification of the benefits of the implementation program, including proposed projects; and
- Provides an estimate of total project and program costs.

[Minnesota Statutes § 103B.801](#), Subdivision 4, lists areas that the MRMW Partnership will consider and discuss as part of the watershed plan development process. These issue areas include:

- Surface water and groundwater quality protection, restoration, and improvement, including prevention of erosion and soil transport into surface waters.
- Restoration, protection, and improvement of surface water and groundwater storage and retention systems.
- Promotion of groundwater recharge.
- Flood damage reduction, especially to minimize future public expenditures needed to correct flooding problems.
- Wetland enhancement, restoration, and establishment.
- Shoreland and riparian zone management and buffers.
- Protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.

However, our local water planning process is not limited to these issues. Broad issue areas that may also be identified for inclusion in the watershed planning process include:

- Soil health
- Altered hydrology
- Maintenance of core services; understanding of local capacity
- Water supply (protect, provide, and conserve)
- Drinking water supply
- Drainage system management
- Wastewater management
- Education, outreach, and civic engagement
- Contaminants of emerging concern
- Emerging issues (e.g. land cover)
- Climate Change
- Resiliency and risk management
- Invasive species management

The list above is not all-inclusive. Any land and water-related issues could be part of the Plan. Further, issues may also include addressing administrative priorities (e.g., the establishment of uniform local policies and controls in the watershed) or fiscal challenges (e.g., minimizing public capital expenditures in resolving problems in areas such as flood control or water quality protection).

An underlying theme within these requirements is the intent for the watershed-based plan to be succinct, with a thorough and science-based process used in development, and an emphasis in the resulting Plan on the implementation schedule and implementation programs. For example, the information found in a Land and Water Resources Inventory is extremely valuable to the planning process and ultimate implementation of the actions in the Plan; however, the majority of this information will be incorporated into the final Plan document by reference.

Finally, for this planning process, the successful Consultant will have demonstrated experience in the use and interpretation of GIS-based habitat evaluation models, hydrologic and hydraulic models, and water quality models. Preference will be given to the use of nonproprietary, publicly developed models. The tools utilized in developing a capital improvement program must be able to demonstrate prioritized, targeted, and measurable outcomes.

Understanding

This project is a comprehensive watershed management planning process, supported by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and taking place in the Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed as delineated in the attached Partnership Boundary Map. The Consultant hired for plan writing services will be responsible for compiling available information as well as data generated by the Partnership's Planning Work Group and in the Partnership's Advisory and Policy Committee meetings, drafting a comprehensive watershed management plan, and editing that plan based on input from the Partnership's Advisory and Policy Committees into the final product to be submitted to BWSR for approval. The contracted plan writer will participate in a set number of meetings with the Watershed Policy and Advisory Committees and Steering Team. Meeting facilitation throughout the process will be led by the Consultant and local staff. The information generated at the meetings will form the basis from which the Advisory and Policy Committees will create the Plan content and the selected plan writing

The Consultant will be responsible for drafting a plan containing all required content. The selected Consultant will follow the requirements of [Minnesota Statutes §103B.801](#), the Plan Content Requirements version 2.1 for One Watershed, One Plan, and Operating Procedures version 2.0 which can be found at: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/one-watershed-one-plan-policies>

General Parameters

1. This is a qualifications-based selection. A final scope, schedule, and budget will be negotiated with the successful Consultant. Only one Consultant will be selected to provide all services requested. The Consultant will be required to enter into a contract with Nicollet County.
2. Plan writing services, facilitation for the Policy and Advisory Committees and Steering Team, and modeling services will be provided by the Consultant. Please list models available within your consulting firm that the Partnership could consider using during Plan development and identify any gaps in model availability. Based on watershed characteristics, available data, and your expertise, please explain which model would work best for the Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed and why, including any long-term considerations regarding outputs, estimated load reductions, maintenance of model, etc.
3. The *Plan Development Work Plan* (Attachment A) outlines the task, lead, and timeframe for task completion. It is anticipated that the Consultant hired will complete Tasks 1.3, 1.4, and 2.1 - 3.2.
4. The kickoff and mid-planning progress public meetings (Work Plan Task 2.3.5). Will be completed by the MRMW Partnership, in coordination with the Mankato State University Water Resources Center, with limited involvement of the Consultant.
5. The final Plan will be outcome-based. The Consultant will work with the Partnership to 1) identify specific project locations; 2) provide an analysis of project load reduction benefits at multiple locations that have been identified as resource concerns; 3) develop estimated costs for the implementation of the practices; and 4) provide a comparison of the proposed reductions to measurable goals. The selected Consultant is responsible for aggregating, evaluating, and mapping existing watershed data, including interpretation of the results from watershed models that have been completed. A list of existing plans and technical information

that are to be incorporated into the Plan is provided (Attachment B). This list is not inclusive of all plans, studies, and technical information that is available.

6. The estimated number of meetings, virtual or in-person, which the Consultant will need to attend is 60. The final number of meetings and the specific role (preparation of agendas, maps, figures, meeting notes, technical facilitation) of the Consultant will be set during the negotiation of a scope, schedule, and budget with the successful Consultant. The meetings to be attended may include:
 - i. Advisory Committee meetings (lead) - 10
 - ii. Public meetings (support) - 2
 - iii. Policy Committee meetings (support) – 8
 - iv. Steering Team (lead and support) – 40

Attention: The projected figures for the meeting estimate are intended for proposal purposes. However, we anticipate revising these numbers as we progress through the planning stage and may engage in renegotiations accordingly.

7. The draft and final plans will be developed within the parameters outlined in the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures and Plan Content Requirements, found at: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/one-watershed-one-plan-policies>.
8. The primary contact for the Consultant will be the day-to-day administer of the One Watershed, One Plan planning grant. The day-to-day is responsible for organizing Steering Team, Advisory and Policy Committee meetings and disseminating information to committees and planning partners.

RFQ Submittal Format

The maximum page length for the Qualifications submittal, excluding resumes, is 30 pages. The Partnership discourages lengthy narratives containing extraneous information.

The cover letter will not exceed one (1) page. The requested table of contents and order is:

- A. Cover Letter
- B. Table of Contents
- C. Project Understanding
- D. Approach to Scope of Work
 - a. Describe how service will be provided. Include a detailed listing and description of tasks, assigned staff, assumptions, and deliverables. Please add tasks that may be necessary based on your experience with other similar planning processes.
- E. Approach to Project Management, Personnel, Role, and Percent Time Allocated to this Project

- a. The qualifications and relevant experience of key personnel to be assigned to the project will be reviewed as part of this process. Preference will be given to firms with key personnel who have experience with similar projects at a similar scale. Experience and qualifications of key personnel with project management, plan writing, technical writing, GIS mapping, water quality models and tools (see Attachment B), meeting facilitation and communications should be highlighted.
- b. Provide a description and organizational chart showing the roles of the Project Manager and all staff that would be assigned to this project. Describe the proposed roles and responsibilities of each staff member and indicate the estimated percent of time that these individuals will be involved in the project. It is expected that the contract with the selected consultant will require no changes to project staff assigned to this project without prior, written approval by the Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed Partnership.

F. Relevant Project Experience

- a. The selection process will evaluate the capabilities of the consulting firm to effectively deliver the project. The information required in this section will be used in the qualitative assessment. Preference will be given to firms who have demonstrated satisfactory experience and performance with watershed planning, One Watershed – One Plan, working with multiple units of government on advisory committees, citizen committees, and meeting facilitation. Provide a list and description of no more than five similar watershed-based planning projects. Links to websites may be provided where the Selection Committee can review the consultant's work in more detail. Please provide links to comprehensive watershed management plans and draft plan comment letters and responses.
- b. Each project description must include the following information:
 - i. Name of the project, the project manager's contact information (project manager name, phone number, e-mail address). An alternative contact at the agency that is familiar with the project may be provided if the project manager is not available.
 - ii. A narrative describing the project.
 - iii. Detailed description of the work or services provided.
 - iv. Up to 5 projects, 1 page per project

G. Earned Value Management System/Tracking

H. Review Process to Ensure Quality of Plan.

- a. QA/QC Plan
- b. Client Testimonials

I. Appendices

- a. Resumes (2 pages for project manager, 1 page/person for all other staff)

Proposal Format

Font: minimum size is 11-point Margins:

1-inch page margins

Page Limit: 30 pages; one side of an 8 1/2" x 11" piece of paper equals one page. Appendices not included in page limit.

Schedule: 1 - 11" x 17" - one side equals one page

The Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed Partnership reserves the right to disqualify any proposals/proposers that do not follow the content and format as described above.

Responses Due

Interested parties must submit an electronic copy to Kenny Famakinwa, MRMW Partnership day-to-day administrator at:

Kenny Famakinwa, Environmental Specialist
Kenny.famakinwa@co.nicollet.mn.us
(507) 934-7073

Submittals are due by **Friday, April 26, 2024**, no later than 5:00 PM CDT. All electronic submittals must be in .pdf format.

Submission Questions and Clarifications

You may contact Kenny Famakinwa by **April, 18, 2024**, with questions.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Proposed Schedule

Friday, April 26, 2024	Submission deadline.
Monday, April 29, 2024	Review of qualifications by a subcommittee of Steering Team and Policy Committee members.
Thursday, May 2, 2024	Presentations by selected submitters to a subcommittee of Steering Team and Policy Committee members. Presentations may be 30 minutes with 15 minutes for questions. Individuals interviewing for the consulting firm should be the individuals that will be the primary contacts during the planning process.
Tuesday, May 13, 2024	Policy Committee votes to choose Project Consultant.
TBD	Chosen Project Consultant will be notified.
TBD	Consultant contract due for review.
TBD	Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed Policy committee meeting to recommend approval of contract with consultant.
TBD	Nicollet County Board meeting to approve consultant contract.

Selection of Consultant

The MRMW Partnership intends to negotiate a final scope, schedule, and budget with the highest-rated Consultant. The MRMW Partnership reserves the right to negotiate a final scope, schedule, and budget with the next highest-rated firm if we are unable to reach an agreement with the first firm.

Disclaimer

The MRMW Partnership retains the right to modify or cancel this solicitation at its own discretion. This RFQ in no way obligates the Partnership into entering a contract. Proposers are responsible for all of their own costs for preparing a response to this RFQ document.

One Watershed, One Plan

Minnesota River - Mankato

Watershed Planning boundary

One Watershed, One Plan

Boundary Map

