



Minnesota River – Mankato 1W1P

Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, February 10, 2024 • 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Meeting Location

Nicollet County Health and Human Services
River Room-Lower Level
622 South Front Street
St Peter, MN 56082

Agenda Items	Action	Time
1. Welcome and Business Items • Approve agenda and minutes • Approve financials • Meeting milestones and timeline	Approve	10 min
2. Section 4: Measurable Goals • Introduce draft measurable goals section • Section still under review by Steering Committee	Introduce	20 min
3. Next Steps • Targeted Implementation Schedule • Implementation Programs • Formal Agreements	Introduce	15 min
4. Action Items and Next Steps • Steering Committee: February 26 • Steering and Advisory: March 26 • Policy Committee: April 14	--	5 min



One Watershed, One Plan: Minnesota River – Mankato

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

December 9, 2024

The One Watershed, One Plan: Minnesota River – Mankato Policy Committee met at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 9, 2024 at the Nicollet County Government Center Emergency Operations Center. Present at the in-person meeting: Blue Earth SWCD – Jacob Quade; City of Lake Crystal – Gina Cooper; City of Saint Peter – Darrell Pettis; Le Sueur SWCD – Earle Traxler; Nicollet County – Marie Dranttel, Chair; Nicollet SWCD – Don Hermanson; Facilitators: Mackenzie Bratsch & Steven Budka; and Recording Secretary: Crystal Madden; BWSR – Shane Bugeja & Jeremy Maul, and HEI – Drew Kessler.

Approve Agenda & Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Pettis and seconded by Traxler to approve the meeting agenda and the October 14, 2024 meeting minutes. All voted in favor of the motion, and the motion passed 6-0. The group discussed access to the Google Drive, and how it works for most members. The majority of the group would like the agenda page printed at the meetings, and the packets kept digital to prevent paper waste. The meeting facilitator will provide physical copies of any documents which were not included in the meeting packet. The Policy Committee also requests the ability to view the Steering Team meeting packets.

Approve Finances

A motion was made to approve the finances and HEI invoices for payment by Pettis and seconded by Hermanson. The motion was recalled and amended to approve the HEI invoice for work completed through September 28, 2024. All voted in favor of the motion, and the motion passed 6-0.

Introductions

Steven Budka, Nicollet County's new Environmental Specialist, was introduced to the group.

Advisory Committee Summary

Kessler summarized the timeline with a finalized plan created by spring 2025, with a plan review and public hearing by July. The first Advisory Committee meeting was held November 22, 2024. Kessler reported there was good attendance and participation by members. Members were provided the draft Land & Water Resources Narrative and priority issues section. Members were given the opportunity to provide verbal feedback at the meeting, and written feedback following the meeting. They participated in a group activity with stations posted around the room where they could view large format priority focus area maps for each defined priority issues section. Steering Team members were present at stations to answer questions. The feedback will be used by HEI in drafting plan goals and action items. Kessler further noted that the Policy Committee will see comment and response tables from the Advisory Committee meetings in the future.

Plan Section 3: Priority Issues

The priority issues section is the third of seven plan sections which make the complete watershed plan. This section contains all the issues which were identified in the planning process, as well as

prioritization of those issues – assigned either high, medium, or low priority. High and medium priority issues are the focus of goals and actions during the implementation stage. The initial draft was approved by the Policy Committee at their October 14th meeting, has gone to the Advisory Committee for their feedback, and Kessler now seeks approval for this draft section.

Some members stated they'd like to see new DNR data included under the Climate heading showing heavy rainfall events are more common in the past 20 years than the past 100 years.

A member questioned why the Emerging Issues and Planning Lenses portion is included. Kessler responded that these are items that studies have begun to distinguish as issues, and later on may need to be included in the plan. Maul recommended including the emerging issues section even though is not a plan requirement. Kessler commented that if we make the decision *not* to include emerging issues we'd have to prepare to answer why it was removed. Enough feedback from the Public Kick-off Survey was received and the group already approved including it in this section.

A motion was made by Hermanson, and seconded by Cooper to approve the draft plan priorities. All voted in favor of the motion, and the motion passed 6-0.

Measurable Goals, Priority Locations and Focus Area Maps

Kessler explained that the measurable goals plan section is made up of short-term and long-term goals for each priority issue. Short-term goals are those we want see happen over the next ten years. Long-term goals are considered the desired future condition of that priority issue. Both the Advisory Committee and the Steering Team recommended keeping goals as realistic, simple, and reportable as possible for future tracking and reporting purposes. It is possible for one measurable goal to address more than one priority issue. The draft goals will be brought to the Steering Team and Advisory Committee before coming back to the Policy Committee for final approval. Each priority issue will have short-term goals with data points used to rank a focus area map.

Impaired Waters focus area map: 'Barely impaired' waters from the Minnesota state's impaired water process are considered the tipping point of the surface water quality standard. Those waters will be used to prioritize surface water and resource priority issues within the plan alongside local priority feedback.

The water quality model mainly used by HEI is called Hydrological Simulation Program FORTAN - Scenario Application Manager, or HSPF-SAM. The HSPF model is used in almost every watershed in the state when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) conducts their Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process. TMDLs are the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's approved amounts of pollutant loading that can occur and have a water body meet water quality standards. Maul explained that the HSPF-SAM model was approved by the Steering Team, since the other model required a data type that hasn't been widely collected within this watershed yet. Additionally, members who had worked with these types of models in the past said HSPF-SAM was easier to use on the backend compared to other models. Kessler has received feedback from other watersheds located in the southwest region of the state that there is more data continuity with the MPCA's TMDL/Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) reports since HSPF-SAM is the same water quality model used. The focus area maps which were reviewed will be made available within Google Drive.

Water Storage, Altered Hydrology, and Flood Reduction focus area map: This focus area map was modified when flooding was moved from low to medium priority after feedback from the Policy

Committee, and at the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. By lumping flooding with these other priority issues, we are able to add acre per feet of storage to the landscape, a measurable goal which improves the flooding condition of the overall watershed. Watershed implementation funds will most likely not be used for local infrastructure projects that specifically focus on flood reduction. However, by including local projects within the plan's action item list, *even though they do not qualify for Clean Water funding*, other funding sources may be sought after using this plan.

A member asked what kind of request would be made to not use the science behind the heat maps, but opinion to override it. Kessler answered that there may be local studies or assessments which weren't included with the state level data these maps are created from. For example, Lake Crystal had a local study completed which may affect the outcome of this heat map, and that data can be submitted to HEI and the local representative can request the group approve an amendment to the map. Kessler requested local studies and data be sent to HEI, and to include Nicollet SWCD on the emails.

Soil Health focus area map: Bugeja shared there is still room for improvement on soil health testing, and that sediment and erosion data is used as a proxy since there is no current statewide soil health data layer. Kessler explained that the Advisory Committee desired to see more than just loss of soil as suggested by the HSPF model, and that this map may shift with the inclusion of more data points like soil type. A member expressed confusion about the color scheme used in this map. If green generally means good, then the darker green designation on the map would equal healthier soil, which is not the case in this map. Kessler explained that the color scheme comes from the sediment and erosion data. A member also stated that the color scheme may be misleading by inferring areas without color have good soil health, which is not necessarily true. Healthy soil holds nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients in the ground instead of it washing away into surface water. Healthier soils tend to hold water, so run-off and flooding less likely. The use of cover crops prevents soil erosion and increases beneficial nutrients, which leads to better soil health. A member recommended adding an action item to educate the public on how soil health is improved with septic compliance throughout the watershed. Kessler suggested adding this as a short-term goal.

Invasive Species focus area map: Kessler explained these maps are going to be used for public outreach education. This map reports both terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. Bugeja explained terrestrial invasive ratings are based on how widespread they are and how easy they are to eradicate. Typically, the worse the rating means the least widespread and the slowest to spread, which makes it easiest to eradicate. It is recommended that effort be focused on the "worst" first. Members threw out the terms "slow the spread" and "mitigate" as favorable terms to use in place of "eradicate".

Next Steps

The next step is to draft the Measurable Goals and Targeted Implementation plan sections. Each planning region will have their own actions and completion schedule. Some measurable goals will have stacked benefit potential from actions, where action progress is made towards several goals. HEI will draft these sections to present to the Steering Team and Advisory Committee, before they will be presented to the Policy Committee for final approval.

Next Meetings

The next Steering Team meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 20th. Bratsch will provide the Steering Team meeting packets to Policy Committee members within the Google Drive. The next Policy Committee is scheduled for Monday, January 13, 2025.

Adjourn

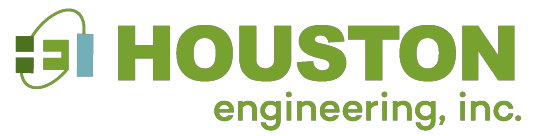
A motion was made by Hermanson and seconded by Traxler to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

MARIE DRANTTEL, Policy Committee Chair
One Watershed, One Plan: Minnesota River - Mankato

Date

DRAFT

INVOICE

**Remit to:**

1401 21st Ave N, Fargo, ND 58102

Phone: 701.237.5065

Fed Tax ID: 45-0314557

Interest of 1%/month applied to past due invoices

Nicollet County (MN)

501 South Minnesota Avenue

Saint Peter, MN 56082

Invoice Number: 74410

Date: December 31, 2024

Project Number: R008364-0005

Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed One Watershed, One Plan Copy**For Professional Services Rendered Through: December 28, 2024****Summary of Work Performed:**

Phase 002: Develop conceptual measurable goals; Develop goal focus area maps and update based on feedback; Revise and finalize Land and Water Resources Narrative and Priority Issues plan sections; Begin drafting Measurable Goals plan section

Phase 004: Prepare for and facilitate in-person Policy Committee meeting (10/14); Prepare for and facilitate remote Steering Committee meeting (10/23); Prepare for and facilitate in person Advisory Committee meeting (11/22); Prepare for and facilitate in person Policy Committee meeting (12/9); Prepare for and facilitate remote Steering Committee meeting (12/20)

002 - Draft Plan**Professional Services**

	Hours	Rate	Amount
Engineer 8	1.50	208.00	\$312.00
GIS Analyst 2	25.50	123.00	\$3,136.50
Project Assistant 4	1.00	108.00	\$108.00
Project Assistant 6	.50	120.00	\$60.00
Scientist 2	24.25	150.00	\$3,637.50
Scientist 4	2.25	178.00	\$400.50
Scientist 6	18.75	221.00	\$4,143.75
	73.75		\$11,798.25

002 - Draft Plan Total:**\$11,798.25****004 - Meetings and Engagement****Professional Services**

	Hours	Rate	Amount
Scientist 6	19.75	221.00	\$4,364.75
Scientist 7	24.00	250.00	\$6,000.00
	43.75		\$10,364.75

Reimbursable Expenses

	Units	Rate	Amount
Personal Vehicle Mileage	140.0000	.670	\$93.80
			\$93.80

004 - Meetings and Engagement Total:

\$10,458.55

Invoice Total	\$22,256.80
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Nicollet SWCD
501 7th Street, PO Box 457
Nicollet, MN 56074

Invoice No. 550

INVOICE

Customer

Name Nicollet County
Address 501 S Minnesota Ave.
City St. Peter State MN ZIP 56082
Phone

Misc

Date 1/8/2025
Order No.
Rep
FOB

Qty	Description	Unit Price	TOTAL
26	2024 Hours for 1W1P Mankato Steering, Policy and Advisory Committee M Coordination - Technician 1	\$ 88.58	\$ 2,303.08
9	2024 Hours for 1W1P Mankato Steering, Policy and Advisory Committee M Coordination - Technician 2	\$ 65.22	\$ 586.98
		SubTotal	\$ 2,890.06
		Shipping	\$ -
		Tax Rate(s) 0.000%	\$ -
		TOTAL	\$ 2,890.06

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO NICOLLET SWCD



2025 Detailed Timeline

Policy Committee = Bimonthly or as needed; 2nd Monday of the month

Steering Committee= Monthly; 4th Wednesday of the month

Advisory Committee = Quarterly; Joint with Steering Committee

2025	MONTH	Remote	In Person	Committee	Tasks
	JANUARY		1	Steering	Feedback on goals section; Discuss action tables and proposed modeling scenario
	FEBRUARY	1	1	Policy	Update on goals plan section and action tables; Update on Advisory Committee meeting
			1	Steering	Review and feedback on draft action tables and completed modeling scenario
	MARCH		1	Advisory & Steering	Feedback on goals plan section and action tables; Joint with AC
	APRIL		1	Policy	Review and approve goals plan section; Update on action table; Introduction to implementation programs; Formal Agreements
			1	Steering	Final revisions to action tables; Draft implementation programs and plan admin sections
	MAY	1	1	Policy	Approve implementation programs and plan admin; Release for Internal Review end of month (following Steering Committee meeting); Formal Agreements
				Steering	Final plan clean up to send plan out for Internal Review
	JUNE		1	Public	No meetings- Internal Review <i>Public listening session- review plan highlights and receive feedback</i>
	JULY		1	Advisory & Steering	Discuss comments from internal review and public listening session; Joint with AC; Brief meeting after to discuss formal review and public hearing
	AUGUST	1	1	Policy	Discuss comments from internal review; Release for Formal Review; Formal Agreements
				Steering	Discuss logistics for public hearing
	SEPTEMBER				No meetings- Formal Review
	OCTOBER	1			No meetings- Formal Review
	NOVEMBER		1	Steering	Discuss comments from Formal Review
	DECEMBER		1	Policy & Public	<i>Public Hearing; 3:00 - 5:00 pm timeframe?</i>
	OTHER	1	1		BWSR Regional Transition to implementation planning
		5	12		

Roadmap for Today

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1. Welcome and Business Items • Approve agenda and minutes • Approve financials • Meeting milestones and timeline	Approve	10 min
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Minnesota River-Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Mgmt Plan



- Section 1: Executive Summary
- Section 2: Land and Water Resources Narrative (**Approved**)
- Section 3: Priority Issues (**Approved**)
- Section 4: Measurable Goals
- Section 5: Targeted Implementation
- Section 6: Implementation Programs
- Section 7: Plan Administration and Coordination

Minnesota River-Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Mgmt Plan

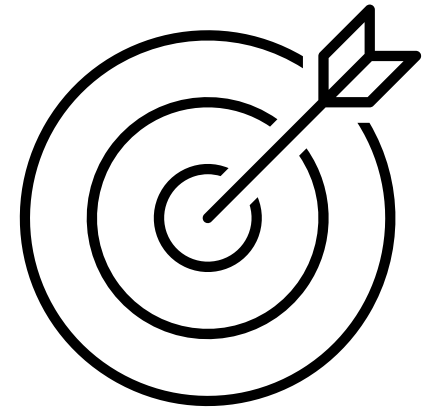


- Section 1: Executive Summary
- Section 2: Land and Water Resources Narrative (Approved)
- Section 3: Priority Issues (Approved)
- **Section 4: Measurable Goals**
- Section 5: Targeted Implementation
- Section 6: Implementation Programs
- Section 7: Plan Administration and Coordination

Recap: Measurable Goals

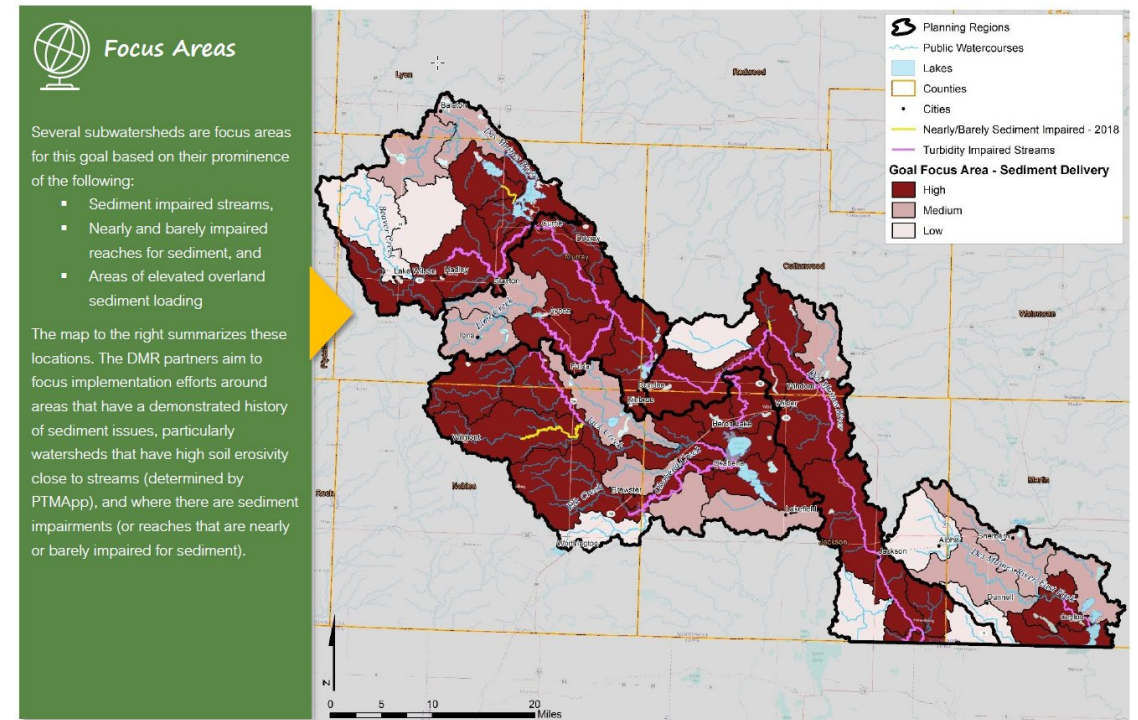
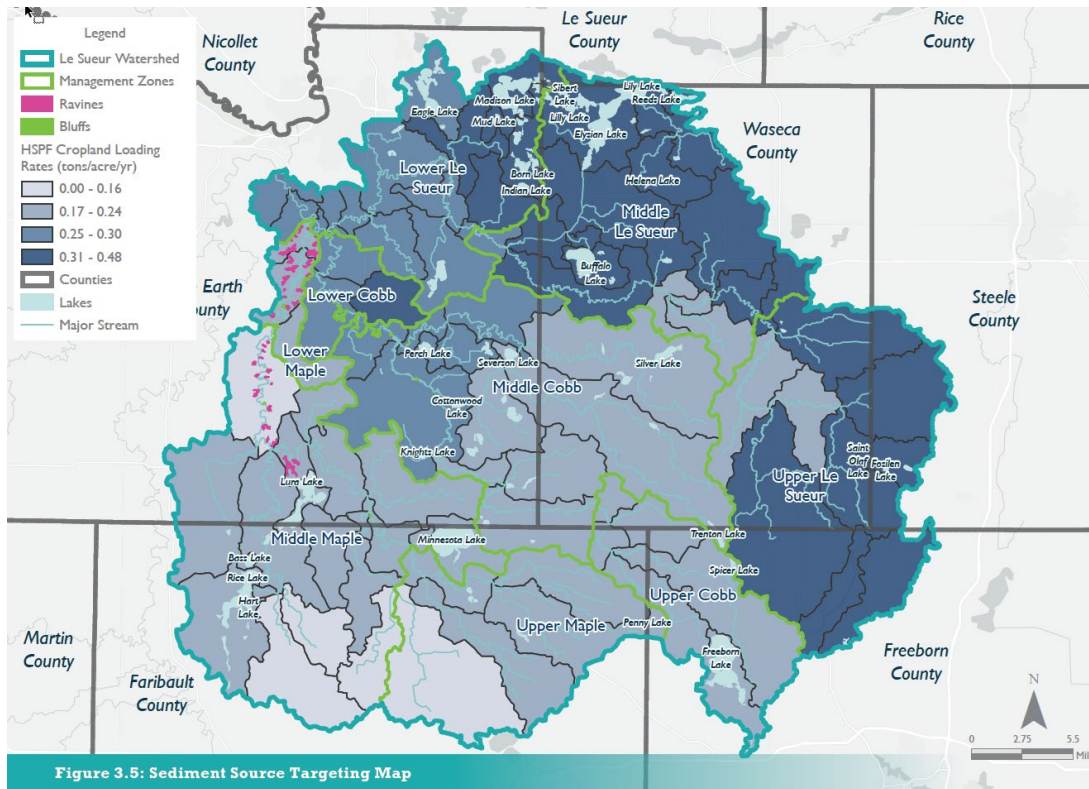


- BWSR Plan Content Requirement
- Goals for two timeframes:
 - Ten year
 - Desired future condition
- Keep them **realistic, simple and reportable**



Recap: Focus Areas for Each Measurable Goal

- Used to prioritize what resources and/ or subwatersheds should be the focus for each goal
- Keep them **simple**
 - Identify 1- 2 geospatial data layers to represent each goal



Last Meeting (December)

- Reviewed each goal and focus area map
- Provided feedback for how to improve

Section still under review by Steering Committee

Goal Today

- Overview of DRAFT section
- Discuss initial reaction
- Timeline for review

DRAFT for Steering Committee Review: January 2025



4. Measurable Goals

The **Measurable Goals** plan section identifies priority resources and areas. There are seven 10-year goals with desired future conditions to address the medium and high priority issues in Section 3 – Priority Issues.

- The 10-year goal is the key output of this section, and is displayed in the navy-blue boxes
- A list of priority lakes and streams was developed
- Focus area maps show where work should be targeted

Goals

Part of an effective plan is having quantifiable, measurable goals with a clear timeframe. Watershed goals include a measurable 10-year goal with a metric clarifying how progress towards the goal will be tracked. Additionally, a 'desired future condition' is stated, which is a long-term, idealistic goal the planning partners would like the resource condition to be at some undetermined point in the future. Some goals address more than one goal, as shown in **Table 4-1**.

Each goal is described over 2-3 pages, with the issues being addressed, background information describing the issue and how the goal will improve the issue, and the goal information displayed to the right. The main goal this plan is working towards is the short-term (10-year) goal.

The goals each have a focus area map, which use data to show where in the watershed work toward the goal should be targeted. Where relevant, these maps show the high priority subwatersheds for prioritization.

Short-term Goal:

A quantifiable change expected in a resource in 10-years

Desired Future Condition

The long-term goal, a hoped-for condition of a resource at an undetermined point in the future

Stacked Benefits

Recognized secondary benefits of work towards the short-term goal