

Meeting Minutes
Bois de Sioux Watershed
Advisory Committee Meeting
June 26, 2019 at 9:30 am

Committee Members

Jay Backer **[Absent]**
Scott Bauer
Duane Duin **[Absent]**
Dean Frisch **[Absent]**
Doug Jahnke **[Absent]**
Eric Klindt **[Absent]**
Tom Monson **[Absent]**

Joe Montonye
Beau Peterson **[Absent]**
Ron Staples
Mark Summer **[Absent]**
Vernell Wagner
John Walkup **[Absent]**

Also Present:

Engineer Chad Engels
Technician Troy Fridgen
Bois de Sioux Watershed President Linda Vavra
Administrator Jamie Beyer

1. **Call to order**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Policies**

New Policy: Culvert Cost Share Policy. The District has long recognized the flood mitigation benefits of coordinated culvert sizing, and aims to encourage future culvert sizing through this financial cost-share incentive. The policy is limited to in-line/in-channel crossing culverts for both public and private crossings (side-inlet culverts are not funded). Cost-share is awarded on a case-by-case basis.

New Policy: Clean Water Cost Share Policy. BWSR currently offers a Multipurpose Drainage Management Grant that financially recognizes the clean water aspects of ditch retrofit projects. This grant has become highly competitive, and instead of receiving 50 – 75% cost-share, a recent project was offered less than 15% cost-share. To address potential shortfalls, Board managers have implemented an internal cost-share program to supplement state grant dollars; eligible items include side inlet culverts (including culvert, flared-end section, riprap blanket and installation), excavation and spoil bank leveling, channel seeding, grade control structures used to reduce in-channel velocity. Cost share will be considered by the Board when a drainage system that proceeds with a repair or improvement that includes a clean water retrofit and a redetermination of benefits. Cost-share is awarded on a case-by-case basis.

New In-Progress Policy: Watershed Management District. The District has initiated work to establish a 103D.729 Water Management District in order to create an assessment district for the Lake Traverse Water Quality Improvement Project #1, which is an outlet for TCD #52. The Board has reviewed cost estimates and the methodology to determine possible assessments. The next

step is to hold a landowner meeting. Phase I construction involves 4 rock riffle drop structures, spaced from Lake Traverse to Highway 27. This stretch is a DNR public water, whereby the project would restore ½ a mile of stream (but the channel will remain straight). 3:1 slopes will be constructed. Cost estimate: \$500,000 - \$750,000. Phase II and Phase III will address in-channel erosion. Montonye suggested that the loss of farmland, along the edge of the channel, may be strong motivation to garner landowner support.

4. Permitting

With many fields in the District too wet to plant, permit applications have been on the rise. As of July 11, 2018, the District had received 56 permit applications. As of June 26, 2019, the District had received 58 permits. The increase in activity has also caused shorter supply in culvert and ditch materials and supplies.

5. Spring Flood

Pictures of the 2019 Spring Flood were presented. Engels stated that this was a historic flood for 12-Mile Creek, which seemed to drive the flooding at the Mustinka River outlet. Less extreme flooding was noted in the Upper Mustinka, in comparison. There were many snow events over the winter, and the Advisory Committee discussed fall's highly saturated soil conditions, frozen early by extremely cold December temperatures. North Ottawa was 75% filled with floodwaters. Adjacent landowners have voiced satisfaction with how the Impoundment mitigated flood damages. Joe Montonye and Vernell Wagner have heard positive comments.

6. Ditch Projects

The repair of WCD #8 will be completed this summer; the improvement of WCD #9 & #10 will begin this summer. The repair of JD #11 is proposed for 2020, following redeterminations proceedings that may begin this fall. The repair of JD #6 is tentatively scheduled for 2021. Landowners had expressed interest in repair WCD Sub-Ditch #1, but no formal proceedings have begun.

Two JD #12 laterals may be involved in a proposed Grant County road improvement project. A landowner meeting has been scheduled in July.

7. Watershed Projects

No resolution has been reached with the DNR over management of the North Ottawa Impoundment. Redpath land acquisition attempts continue. Wagner reported that the Big Lake Project continues to be stalled by the DNR.

8. Buffers

In April 2019, the District's buffer rule was adopted. The Bois de Sioux is the buffer enforcement agency for legal drainage ditches in Grant, Traverse, and Wilkin Counties. Beyer recently attended a meeting in Grant County called by BWSR Regional Buffer and Soil Loss Specialist Paul Erdmann. BWSR collected information about how buffer compliance is tracked and alternative practices are approved. Paul Erdmann reported that, for the six counties under BWSR's jurisdiction in his region,

only one landowner is in non-compliance. Wilkin County SWCD staff are currently contacting non-compliant landowners and offering a 75%-25% voluntary cost-share program. Traverse County offers a \$200/acre & \$300/acre voluntary cost-share program.

9. 1W1Plan

Engels thanked Montonye for his guidance on establishing Planning Regions and goal categories, at the beginning of the 1Watershed1Plan development. The PTMApp model is now available, but Montonye advised that the model doesn't replicate or replace local knowledge and experience on the land.

10. Adjourn

THE NEXT MEETING IS TENATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 8, 2020 AT 8:30 AM