

Meeting Notes

Clearwater River Dissolved Oxygen and Fecal Coliform TMDL Study

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting

March 21, 2007

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Clearbrook Community Center - Choir Room

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting started at 10:10 a.m. Twenty-three people in attendance.

Previous Studies and Monitoring Efforts

Corey discussed the existing data including biological studies, Clearwater Nonpoint Study, Dr. Svedarsky's fecal coliform study, Red River Basin's Buffer Initiative, efforts by wild rice producers to reduce sedimentation by installing mainline tile systems.

J. Gunvalson stated that his mainline tile is tied into his water control structure and therefore not exposed to any soil.

Corey mentioned that he considers tiling a Best Management Practice for wild rice growers.

Don Barron asked about the study taking place on tiling agricultural land around Oklee.

Corey explained what each site would be sampled for, the daily maximum limits, and the various pieces of equipment that are used. Fecal: 200 cfu/100 ml monthly mean; 2000 cfu/100 ml single sample. Oxygen: 5 mg/L for warm water fisheries; 7 mg/L for cold water. 303(d) List of Impaired Waters > 10% are < standard = partially supporting aquatic life; > 25% are < standard = not supporting.

Monitoring for fecal he will target priority locations during the months of June, July, and August with the possibility of added May and/or September depending on budget.

Oxygen can be measured continuously in-stream once per hour. The levels are lower at night and higher in the daytime. Ideal time to measure is between 8-10 in the morning.

Results of the Data Review Process – By Reach

1. *Clearwater River Fecal Coliform Impairment* Possible for delisting, but give it another year of monitoring before any recommendation is made
2. *Clearwater River Dissolved Oxygen Impairment*

Comment was made if you still have a problem area within a reach, the reach cannot be de-listed. Corey mentioned some improvements on some of the reaches including rock riffles.

John Gunvalson asked how wide the riffles were. He stated he had received a DNR permit to install rock crossing for machinery to pass and the crossings were 30-40 feet wide. Pine Lake has one and Gunvalson farms have two.

There was a lot of discussion from the group at this point. Molly reminded the group that if a reach is listed as impaired MPCA is obligated to do a study. This opens the door to significant implementation funding.

There was some discussion about what is the goal of the monitoring and the goal is to improve the reaches so they can support aquatic life. That is what the standards are written for.

There was discussion on E. Coli and where it comes from. It can come from a variety of sources and the standard does not differentiate the source. Molly will follow-up by getting the guidance for E. Coli. Some states have been using E. Coli levels instead of fecal coliform.

Molly mentioned that Bemidji State University is interested in conducting a study on the bacteria respiration in the fens. This project will be considered for \$45,000 in special project funds.

Question was asked if monitoring sites might be moved in order to get a better understanding of the sources/problems. Corey said that yes the sites will be reviewed every couple of years.

3. *County Ditch 57 Dissolved Oxygen Impairment* This is a limited resource value water – intermittent stream flow
4. *Poplar River Dissolved Oxygen Impairment* Fosston and McIntosh wastewater plants are on this reach, what is the influence? Shade could be improved along this reach. Longitudinal surveys were mentioned.
5. *Lost River Fecal Coliform Impairment* Three monitoring sites, Oklee, Anderson Lake and one in between

6. *Silver Creek Fecal Coliform Impairment* There will be three sites monitored on a monthly basis with an additional site by Clear Brook
7. *Walker Brook Dissolved Oxygen Impairment* The reclassification is still pending. It most likely would be reclassified as impaired by natural causes. It was discussed that the Walker Brook is really a wetland versus a stream, but it was still originally listed as a stream.

Frank Beaver mentioned they have found that there could be methane and carbon dioxide in the Walker Brook that is consuming the available oxygen.

Molly reminded everyone that the standards will not always fit every situation. Prior to recommending a delisting need to write up a justification. Group decided to stay the course for one more year of monitoring before recommending and delisting.

There is an inter-agency group (MN BWSR, MN DNR, MPCA) looking into the water quality of ditches versus streams.

2007 Statewide Water Quality Assessment

SWAT Model Update

Bethany told the group the Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT) will model the impairment and what results might be expected if Best Management Practices are installed to improve the impairments. For a good model, you need to make sure you put good data into your model. The model will look at soil types, land uses, land cover, topography, and management practices on the land. The model will compare predictions to actual measurements. Right now the EERC is working to set up the contract with modeling to start early 2008.

2008 – 2009 Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Challenge Grant Application Ideas

Corey asked the group for ideas for the Challenge Grant opportunity. These grants are for education and implementation with 50% cost share and 50% in-kind generally. Some possible ideas included a fish passage for Spring Lake in Lengby, planting shade trees to improve cooling, and possible cost share for main line tile drainage.

Next Steps in the TMDL Process

The group will meet again around November or December 2007 and at that time will go over the results of the storm water study and the Silver Creek buffer initiative results.

At the end of the meeting Vern Johnson asked Molly about the availability of project implementation funds. Molly did mention that projects that could not wait could be considered for special project funds and she would be willing to work with the group on submitting ideas.