

# Charter for the Vermillion River Watershed Technical Advisory Group

December 1, 2016

## Background

This charter describes the purpose of the Vermillion River Watershed Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and general guidelines for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) in working with the TAG. Effective water resource management depends upon decisions made cooperatively based on sound scientific, technical, and policy information. The watershed benefits from VRWJPO consultation with technical stakeholders, who bring training, experience, and local perspective to discussions about VRWJPO policies and plans.

## VRWJPO Mission

The mission of the VRWJPO is to collaboratively provide education, science, and support to restore and protect the Vermillion River Watershed's natural resources for all who live, work, and play within its boundaries.

## Purpose of the TAG

The TAG provides advice and recommendations to the VRWJPO on scientific, technical, and policy issues that affect water resources management in the Vermillion River Watershed. TAG members will be requested for advice on:

- The Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan – plan content, plan revisions or amendments, proposed changes to the watershed Standards, adoption of Standards into local water management plans/comprehensive plans, plan evaluation, for example;
- The Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy – water resources added to or deleted from the impaired waters list, changes in state pollutant standards affecting water resources, for example;
- Changes in state or federal regulations that may affect local water resource management – state buffer laws, wetland banking, re-classification of water resources, for example;
- Presentations about or tours of innovative technology solutions that may have broader application within the watershed – nitrate-reduction options, *E. coli* reduction options, stormwater or wastewater re-use strategies, for example.
- Proposed VRWJPO operational changes that may affect watershed stakeholders – cost-share policy, for example.

TAG members are encouraged to suggest issues for the meetings, especially those affecting water resources management locally.

## Who Attends TAG Meetings:

TAG members represent local governments (cities, townships, and counties), state agencies, soil and water conservation districts, tribes, environmental consulting firms, environmental groups, watershed management organizations, the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission (WPC), and other interested parties. Membership is open and flexible; contact the VRWJPO to be included on the email invitation list.

**TAG Meetings:**

- Will be planned four times a year **or** when the VRWJPO needs to consult the TAG on specific issues.
- Will be scheduled for two hours (usually 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.) and may end earlier.
- Are held at the Dakota County Western Service Center, 14955 Galaxie Ave., Apple Valley, in a conference room noted on the agenda.
- Will include brief presentations, informal discussion among peers, and occasional watershed tours.

**TAG Members:**

- Provide knowledge, perspective, suggestions, and critiques on scientific and technical issues affecting watershed management.
- Represent the views of the entities in which they serve.
- Expect the VRWJPO to use TAG suggestions or recommendations in decision-making.

**VRWJPO Staff:**

- Will provide at least two weeks' notice of the TAG meeting date, time, location, and agenda.
- Will not cancel TAG meetings without at least one day advanced notice.
- Will provide background information, draft plans/policies, or other material in advance of the meeting date, whenever possible.
- Will show how suggestions or recommendations are used by providing revisions for the TAG members' review.
- Document TAG suggestions or recommendations, but do not formally prepare meeting minutes.
- Will provide welcome, introductions, and meeting facilitation.