



Agenda

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

February 25, 2021, 1 p.m.

Teleconference using Zoom

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---------|
| 1. Call to Order | | |
| 2. Roll Call | | |
| 3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
(please limit audience comments to five minutes) | | |
| 4. Consent Agenda | Action | |
| a. Approval of Agenda | | Page 1 |
| b. Approval of Minutes from the January 28, 2021, Meeting | | Page 3 |
| c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report | | Page 9 |
| d. Schedule a Public Hearing for Modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule | | Page 11 |
| 5. Approval of Expenses | Action | Page 17 |
| 6. Business Items | | |
| a. Adoption of an Amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section | Action | Page 18 |
| b. Progress Update on Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township | Information | Page 20 |
| c. Presentation on Cost-Share Programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District | Information | Page 22 |
| 7. Staff Reports | | |
| 8. Adjourn | Action | |

* Draft minutes from the February 10, 2021, Watershed Planning Commission Meeting are included at the end of the packet as information for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

Please note, the February 25, 2021, Joint Powers Board meeting will take place **via teleconference by phone and/or the web-based application, Zoom**. In response to COVID-19, no in-person meeting will be available. We are following provisions in Minnesota Open Meeting Law addressing meetings in the case of a pandemic.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/j/93897362610?pwd=TmE5eUZ0U0VOWnZCbC9UU3lrRWFUUT09>

Meeting ID: 938 9736 2610

Passcode: 235377



One tap mobile

+16513728299,,93897362610#,,,,*235377# US (Minnesota)

Dial by your location

+1 651 372 8299 US (Minnesota)

Meeting ID: 938 9736 2610

Passcode: 235377

Find your local number: <https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/j/a0H04m8l5>

Other Information

Next Meeting Date: **March 25, 2021**, at 1 p.m.

You will be notified if the meeting is cancelled due to an anticipated lack of quorum.



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

January 28, 2021, 1 p.m., Teleconference using Zoom

Board Members in Attendance

Dakota County Commissioner Mike Slavik, Chair

Scott County Commissioner, Tom Wolf, Vice-Chair

Dakota County Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland, Secretary/ Treasurer

Others in Attendance

Mark Zabel, Dakota County, Watershed Administrator

Melissa Bokman Ermer, Scott County, Watershed Co-administrator

Travis Thiel, Dakota County, Senior Watershed Specialist

Mark Ryan, Dakota County, VRWJPO Watershed Engineer

Paula Liepold, Dakota County, Public Outreach and Communications

Helen Brosnahan, Dakota County, Assistant County Attorney

Steve Mielke, Dakota County Physical Development Division Director

Brian Watson, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager

Troy Kuphal, Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1 p.m.

2. Election of Joint Powers Board Officers

Mark Zabel opened nominations for Chair. Commissioner Hamann-Roland nominated Commissioner Slavik as Chair. After three calls for other nominations, there were none made. Zabel asked if there was any objection to the election of Commissioner Slavik to the Chair by acclamation. There was no objection. Zabel declared Commissioner Slavik elected Chair of the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board by acclamation.

Commissioner Slavik assumed control of the meeting.

Commissioner Slavik asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Wolf was nominated for, and a unanimous vote was taken electing Commissioner Wolf as Vice Chair. Nominations were then called for Secretary/Treasurer. Commissioner Hamman-Roland was nominated for and a unanimous vote was taken electing Commissioner Hamman-Roland as Secretary/Treasurer.

Commissioners Slavik and Wolf welcomed Commissioner Hamann-Roland to service on the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

3. Roll Call

Commissioners Slavik, Wolf, and Hamann-Roland were in attendance.

4. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments from the audience.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the December 3, 2020, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District for Services in 2021
- e. Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with Scott Soil and Water Conservation District for Services in 2021
- f. Authorization to Amend a Joint Powers Agreement with City of Hastings for the 21st St. Stormwater Treatment Projects

Res. No. VRW 21-01: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Hamann-Roland, and passed on a 3-0 roll call vote to approve the consent agenda.

6. Approval of Expenses

Mark Zabel presented the last two months of expenses as shown on item number 6

Res. No. VRW 21-02: Motion by Commissioner Hamann-Roland, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 roll call vote to approve the expenses totaling \$163,866.59 incurred between November 21, 2020, and December 16, 2020, and, \$144,602.44 incurred between December 17, 2020, and January 19, 2021.

Business Items

7a. Public Hearing to Receive Comments on an Amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section

Troy Kuphal described the Bemis Wetland and a potential project to replace the outlet structure and reconstruct the berm, or a portion of the berm, in order to prevent the imminent failure of the outlet and sudden draining of the wetland. This project is proposed to be added to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan via an amendment to its Implementation Section. Adding the project to the Plan will make it eligible for various funding sources.

Commissioner Slavik opened the public hearing to receive comments on the proposed amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan.

After inquiry, no individuals on the remote meeting provided comments to the amendment. No written comments to the amendment were received by the VRWJPO to date.

Commissioner Slavik also clarified that today's item was solely for the purpose of receiving public comment. Zabel affirmed only action was to hold the public hearing.

With no comments or further discussion, Commissioner Wolf moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Hamann-Roland seconded. Roll call, all yes.

7b. Hastings High School Field Biology Class Presentation on Monitoring Macroinvertebrates at a Site in the Vermillion River

Commissioner Slavik Introduced the item. Following introduction of individuals present and their role with the VRWJPO, Joe Beattie described his high school field biology class and their sampling of macroinvertebrates at a site on the Vermillion River in Hastings. Mr. Beattie's classes have been doing this work since 1997. He introduced Ella Kelly who provided a slide presentation of the sampling and the macroinvertebrates collected in 2020 as well as slides comparing results of sampling over time. Overall, the river at this site is showing water quality improvement based on diversity and types of macroinvertebrates sampled.

Commissioners commented positively on the professional presentation provided by Ms. Kelly.

7c. Consideration of Candidates and Appointments to the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission

Mark Zabel indicated there are currently two open positions on the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission (WPC). The VRWJPO received three eligible applications for the two open seats; Pamela Rubash from the City of Apple Valley, Andrew Riesgraf from the City of Apple Valley, and James Kotz from the City of Rosemount. The applications were presented to the WPC at their January meeting and, upon review of the applications, the WPC recommended Andrew Riesgraf and James Kotz be appointed to the two open seats based on the information provided in their applications. The Board can follow the recommendation of the WPC or refer the applications to a review panel made up of the Chair of the VRWJPB, the Chair of the VRWPC, and the Administrator for further consideration, or take other action it deems appropriate. The Board approved the appointment of Mr. Riesgraf and Mr. Kotz. There was discussion about formalizing the appointment process into a policy.

Res. No. VRW 21-03: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Hamann-Roland, and passed on a 3-0 roll call vote to appoint Andrew Riesgraf and James Kotz to the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission.

Staff Reports

Paula Liepold provided information on her position with the County and collaborating with the VRWJPO outreach staff. She informed commissioners that she will assist the VRWJPO with various outreach activities until the position is filled.

Travis Thiel provide information about a property owner in Hastings that has on on-going issue with water backing up into his basement.

Travis also described a potential project he has been working on with Ravenna Township where a neighborhood area is experiencing flooding during storm runoff and snowmelt conditions Ravenna Township is looking into potential solutions for this neighborhood Resizing culverts could improve the situation but not completely solve it. The VRWJPO has been working with the Water Resources Unit at Dakota County to determine whether stormwater storage upstream of 200th Street could provide water quality improvements and stormwater management that could aid in solving the flooding issues.

Travis then gave a brief update on the Watershed Based Implementation Funding which is provided through a Clean Water Fund Grant administered by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources which provides funds to projects identified within the watershed. The VRWJPO will receive funding from the grant for a subset of the projects identified for funding within the watershed. The VRWJPO will receive funding for several projects. The VRWJPO will receive approximately \$490,000 for the grant projects.

Mark Ryan is planning to attend the Ravenna Township meeting on February 11th to give a final project update on the Records Trail project. He is also obtaining input from the Township related to ravine drainage issues that leave sediment on County Road 54 adjacent to the Vermillion River after storm events.

Mark then discussed comments received about high water/flooding around a wetland area west of the City of Vermillion off of County Road 62. Staff are coordinating with the Dakota SWCD and other partners about the potential issues and solutions for the area, such as culvert cleaning and sediment removal. Staff are considering creating a map of the area of interest and starting a discussion with local landowners about the issues and the various components of the problem (ground water, surface water, conveyance, storage).

Brian Watson of the Dakota SWCD reported on results of groundwater monitoring data and surface water monitoring data for an area east of the City of Vermillion near Goodwin Avenue which showed the total flow in the Vermillion River at Goodwin Avenue was twice what it had been compared to in a normal year. He also noted that a nearby open water wetland has grown significantly in area over the last few years. The SWCD received many calls about high water in these areas.

Brian also reported that we are about in the middle of the Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township.

Melissa Bokman Ermer provide an update on the Webster Wetland Restoration in the City of Elko-New Market which is funded in-part through the Watershed Based Implementation Fund grant through the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. The project is now complete, and all documentation has been submitted. Melissa will be compiling the information and submitting an invoice to the VRWJPO for reimbursement of the grant funding.

Mark Zabel noted that Jen Dullum left employment with Dakota County as of January 8, 2021. Jen's position with the VRWJPO through Dakota County was primarily a public communications and outreach position which supported social media, website maintenance, as well as partnering with cities and other local units of government for outreach and civic engagement. Mark is hoping to fill the vacant position quickly. The VRWJPO needs an individual with technical capability and communications skills. The VRWJPO has been active in Watershed Partners and participating in Water Stewards which is a volunteer driven activity and this position would support those volunteer efforts.

Mark also discussed the Vermillion Stewards contract that is an annual contract with the Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) for carrying out several volunteer events each year. This contract originally was managed like a grant. the contract was restructured and is now performance based tied to deliverables specific to the VRWJPO. This program is something that is coordinated through the public communications and outreach position. The contract will be revisited once the open position is filled.

Troy Kuphal of the Scott SWCD mentioned that they will be doing a subwatershed assessment in the headwaters area that will be funded through the Watershed Based Implementation Funding program of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. Completing a subwatershed assessment will identify potential conservation projects that can then be prioritized and implemented in the future.

A discussion was then had about the open position. Commissioners would like position to be more communications and outreach focused to be able to manage those activities internally rather than through outside consultants.

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Hamann-Roland, and passed 3-0 roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: February 25, 2021, at 1 p.m. Location to be determined.

Mark Zabel

Administrator for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Attest

Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Secretary/ Treasurer

Date



2020 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Treasurer's Report

Final December, 2020 - Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

		<u>Budget Amounts</u>	<u>Expenses to Date</u>	<u>Expenses Pending</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>
I.	Administration & Operations (217002-0000)	\$ 233,500.00	\$ 239,698.13	\$ 887.76	\$ (7,085.89)
II.	Research & Planning (217002-0130)	\$ 65,600.00	\$ 18,683.37	\$ 3,680.64	\$ 43,235.99
III.	Monitoring & Assessment (217002-0230)	\$ 160,600.00	\$ 99,995.88	\$ 6,129.98	\$ 54,474.14
IV.	Public Communications & Outreach (217002-0330)	\$ 212,050.00	\$ 147,891.18	\$ 325.00	\$ 63,833.82
V.	Regulation (217002-0530)	\$ 65,900.00	\$ 30,561.76	\$ -	\$ 35,338.24
VI.	Coordination & Collaboration (217002-0531)	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 25,445.21	\$ -	\$ (5,445.21)
VIII.	Feasibility/Preliminary Studies (217002-0631)	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 203,453.54	\$ -	\$ (3,453.54)
X.	Capital Improvement Projects (217092-0130)	\$ 504,300.00	\$ 279,038.10	\$ 9,549.59	\$ 215,712.31
XI.	Met Council Grant (217002-0832)	\$ -	\$ 1,300.00	\$ -	\$ (1,300.00)
XII.	CWF Grant - Alimagnet (217002-0836)	\$ 6,060.00	\$ 6,053.71	\$ -	\$ 6.29
XIII.	CWF Grant - County Road 50 (217002-0837)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XIV.	CWF Grant - South Branch (217002-0838)	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 68,582.40	\$ -	\$ 11,417.60
XV.	CWF Grant - Lakeville (217002-0839)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XVI.	CWF Grant - South Creek (217002-0840)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XVII.	CWF Grant - Erickson Park St (217002-0841)	\$ 164,300.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 164,300.00
XVIII.	CWF Grant - Farmington Street (217002-0842)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XIX.	CWF Grant - Aronson Park Storm (217002-0843)	\$ 100,100.00	\$ 90,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,100.00
XX.	CWF Grant - Webster Wetland (217002-0844)	\$ 67,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 67,000.00
XXI.	CWF Grant - Technical Assistance (217002-0845)	\$ 19,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,500.00
XXII.	CWF Grant - Imminet Health T (217002-0846)	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,000.00
XXIII.	CPL Grant - South Creek at Hamburg (217002-0847)	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 2,524.30	\$ -	\$ 23,475.70
XXIX.	FY2019 - Watershed Funding Grant (217002-0848)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,733.56	\$ -	\$ 266.44
XXX.	CWF Grant - Records Trail/Grade (217002-0849)	\$ 105,000.00	\$ 90,072.88	\$ -	\$ 14,927.12
XXXI.	CWF Grant - 21st Street Ravine Outlet (217002-0850)	\$ 147,600.00	\$ 73,800.00	\$ 73,800.00	\$ -
XXXII.	CWF Grant - Vermillion Falls Bio (217002-0851)	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 18,500.00	\$ -
XXXIII.	CWF Grant - Middle Creek Restoration (217002-0852)	\$ 430,000.00	\$ 1,934.04	\$ -	\$ 428,065.96
VRW JPO Revised Budget Expense TOTAL		<u>\$ 2,657,510.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,381,834.02</u>	<u>\$ 112,872.97</u>	<u>\$ 1,142,368.97</u>

Budget Funding Sources

Scott County Levy	\$ 34,000.00
Dakota County Levy	\$ 966,000.00
Expected 2019 Carryover (Fund Balance)	\$ 569,240.00
Special Use Permit	\$ 2,500.00
2019 CWF Grants (BWSR)	\$ 440,000.00
2019 CWF Grant 1W1P (BWSR)	\$ 159,400.00
CPL Grant South Creek at Hamburg	\$ 25,000.00
Met Council Grant	\$ -
Expected CIP	\$ 549,660.00
Investment Earnings	\$ 20,000.00

\$ 2,765,800.00



2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Treasurer's Report

February 2021 - Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

		<u>Budget Amounts</u>	<u>Expenses to Date</u>	<u>Expenses Pending</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>
I.	Administration & Operations (217002-0000)	\$ 233,500.00	\$ -	\$ 14,386.82	\$ 219,113.18
II.	Research & Planning (217002-0130)	\$ 65,600.00	\$ -	\$ 445.97	\$ 65,154.03
III.	Monitoring & Assessment (217002-0230)	\$ 160,600.00	\$ -	\$ 276.31	\$ 160,323.69
IV.	Public Communications & Outreach (217002-0330)	\$ 213,550.00	\$ -	\$ 7,454.09	\$ 206,095.91
V.	Regulation (217002-0530)	\$ 65,900.00	\$ -	\$ 2,838.92	\$ 63,061.08
VI.	Coordination & Collaboration (217002-0531)	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,237.82	\$ 23,762.18
VIII.	Feasibility/Preliminary Studies (217002-0631)	\$ 150,000.00	\$ -	\$ 15,377.03	\$ 134,622.97
X.	Capital Improvement Projects (217092-0130)	\$ 588,400.00	\$ -	\$ 14,256.93	\$ 574,143.07
XI.	Met Council Grant (217002-0832)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XII.	CWF Grant - Alimagnet (217002-0836)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XIII.	CWF Grant - County Road 50 (217002-0837)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XIV.	CWF Grant - South Branch (217002-0838)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39.85	\$ (39.85)
XV.	CWF Grant - Lakeville (217002-0839)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XVI.	CWF Grant - South Creek (217002-0840)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XVII.	CWF Grant - Erickson Park St (217002-0841)	\$ 164,300.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 164,300.00
XVIII.	CWF Grant - Farmington Street (217002-0842)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XIX.	CWF Grant - Aronson Park Storm (217002-0843)	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
XX.	CWF Grant - Webster Wetland (217002-0844)	\$ 67,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 67,000.00
XXI.	CWF Grant - Technical Assistance (217002-0845)	\$ 19,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,500.00
XXII.	CWF Grant - Imminet Health T (217002-0846)	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,000.00
XXIII.	CPL Grant - South Creek at Hamburg (217002-0847)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XXIX.	FY2019 - Watershed Funding Grant (217002-0848)	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -	\$ 969.81	\$ 11,530.19
XXX.	CWF Grant - Records Trail/Grade (217002-0849)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
XXXI.	CWF Grant - 21st Street Ravine Outlet (217002-0850)	\$ 73,800.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 73,800.00
XXXII.	CWF Grant - Vermillion Falls Bio (217002-0851)	\$ 18,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,500.00
XXXIII.	CWF Grant - Middle Creek Restoration (217002-0852)	\$ 430,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,084.75	\$ 428,915.25
VRW JPO Revised Budget Expense TOTAL		<u>\$ 2,306,150.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 58,368.30</u>	<u>\$ 2,247,781.70</u>

Budget Funding Sources

Scott County Levy	\$ 33,350.00
Dakota County Levy	\$ 966,650.00
Expected 2019 Carryover (Fund Balance)	\$ 225,000.00
Special Use Permit	\$ 2,500.00
CWF Grant (BWSR)	\$ 380,000.00
2019-2021 CWF Grant 1W1P (BWSR)	\$ 263,350.00
2020-2023 CWF Grant WBIF (BWSR)	\$ 243,600.00
CPL Grant South Creek at Hamburg	\$ -
Met Council Grant	\$ -
CIP Reserve	\$ 220,000.00
CIP Reserve Grant Match	\$ 152,950.00
Investment Earnings	\$ 20,000.00
	<u>\$ 2,507,400.00</u>

4d. Schedule a Public Hearing for Modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule

Meeting Date: 2/25/2020
Item Type: Consent-Action
Contact: Mark Ryan
Telephone: 952-891-7596
Prepared by: Mark Ryan
Reviewed by: N/A

N/A

**PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

- Schedule a Public Hearing for Modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule

SUMMARY

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) administers a permit program for its Rules only in municipalities that have chosen not to implement VRWJPO Standards through local ordinances. Since 2017, the VRWJPO has implemented a permit program in Eureka Township after the Township chose to not implement the VRWJPO Standards. A Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule for staff rates, application fees, permit activity escrow amounts, and project securities had been established in prior years and was last updated through approval by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) in February 2018 (VRW 18-11). Fees and securities are discussed in sections 17 and 12 of the VRWJPO Rules, respectively. The more stringent requirement for reviewing the fees and securities is located in Section 12.03 and states that the security amounts shall be reviewed and set “at least once every three years.”

As discovered during the last update in 2018, a public hearing is required to set these fees. A public hearing is planned to be scheduled for the next VRWJPB meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 1:00 pm (CST). Official public notice will be provided via area newspapers and on the VRWJPO website.

VRWJPO staff have reviewed the existing permit fee schedule last updated in 2018 and observed the application of these fees through permitting in Eureka Township since 2017. Based on the review, staff propose the following modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule:

- The hourly rate of the watershed staff performing reviews and inspections has been adjusted to accurately reflect expenses related to staff time and equipment and is a reasonable billing rate in comparison with other permitting programs (\$100/hour to \$90/hour)
- Additional escrow categories have been added to allow more flexibility to VRWJPO staff to “right-size” escrow amounts for the highly variable types of projects
- Removal of security requirements for projects like single family homes that may barely exceed one acre in size of disturbance
- Security amounts have been reduced slightly, and a maximum security amount is now listed

Copies of the existing version of the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule with draft markups can be found as attachments to this request for action from the VRWJPB.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

None to extremely minor. There is a slight reduction in the hourly rate proposed, but this is to better match the staff rates and vehicle charges. While less money comes in with lower escrow amounts, the full amounts have not been used in permitting since 2017, and the reduction is meant to fit escrow amounts to the activities.

Supporting Documents:

Attachment A: Draft Proposed Markups to the VRWJPO Fee and Security Schedule

Previous Board Action(s):

VRW 18-11; 2/22/2018

RESOLUTION**4d. Schedule a Public Hearing for Modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule**

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) operates a permit program in municipalities that do not implement the VRWJPO Standards through local ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the VRWJPO Rules state that the permit fees and security amounts be reviewed at least once every three years; and

WHEREAS, VRWJPO staff have reviewed the existing permit fee and security schedule and have outlined modifications to the schedule.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) schedules a public hearing for modifications to the VRWJPO Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule for 1:00 PM, March 25, 2021.



Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
4100 220th Street West, Suite 103, Farmington, MN 55024

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Permit Program Fee and Security Schedule

Proposed 2/25/2021

TIER ONE:

1. Land disturbing activities less than 1 acre in size but triggering one or more of the criteria for Erosion and Sediment Control requirements listed under Section 7.2.B of the VRWJPO Standards, or
2. Land disturbing activities for an individual single-family residence that disturbs between 1 and 5 acres of land but does not trigger any section of the Standards except for Erosion and Sediment Control requirements.

Permit Application Fee: \$10 (one-time fee to process permit application)

Field Inspection Fees: To be held in escrow according to the escrow account requirements stated below in the following amounts:

- (1) \$450 for land disturbing activities less than 1 acre in size with lower potential for adverse water quality impacts (determination of potential impacts at the discretion of VRWJPO staff).
- (2) \$675 for land disturbing activities less than 1 acre in size with higher potential for adverse water quality impacts (determination of potential impacts is at the discretion of VRWJPO staff).
- (3) \$900 for an individual single-family residence that disturbs between 1 and 5 acres of land but does not trigger any section of the VRWJPO Standards except for Erosion and Sediment Control Requirements.

Security: No security required.

TIER TWO:

1. Land disturbing activities more than 1 acre in size that do not meet the criteria described in Tier One above, or
2. Creation of more than 1 acre of new impervious surface, or
3. Drainage alterations, or
4. Floodplain alterations

Permit Application Fee: \$10 (one-time fee to process permit application)

Field Inspection Fee: To be held in escrow according to the escrow account requirements stated below in the following amounts:

- (1) \$1,800 for land disturbance sites between 1 and 5 acres that do not meet the criteria described in Tier One above and do not result in 1 acre or more of new impervious surface, drainage alterations, or floodplain alterations.
- (2) \$2,700 for land disturbance sites greater than 1 acre that create 1 or more acre of new impervious surfaces, drainage alterations, or floodplain alterations.

Security: Security in the form of cash, performance bond, or an irrevocable renewable letter of credit is required prior to the issuance of a permit. The amount of required security is as follows depending on the type of project:

A. Projects or land disturbing activities disturbing less than 5 acres of land AND creating less than 1 acre of new impervious surfaces:

- (1) \$500 per acre of disturbance for land draining to waters other than DNR designated trout streams.
- (2) \$1,000 per acre of disturbance for land draining to DNR designated trout streams.

B. Projects or land disturbing activities disturbing 5 acres or more of land AND/OR creating 1 acre or more of new impervious surfaces:

- (1) \$2,500 per acre of disturbance for land draining to waters other than DNR designated trout streams (to a maximum of \$100,000).
- (2) \$4,000 per acre of disturbance for land draining to DNR designated trout streams (to a maximum of \$160,000).

Escrow Account Requirements for Field Inspection Fees (Tier One and Tier Two):

An applicant for a permit in tier one or tier two must pay the required amount that shall be placed into escrow at the time the applicant submits the project application. By signing the application form, the applicant enters into an escrow agreement. The permit applicant must pay the actual costs incurred by the VRWJPO for field inspection, administering of corrective actions, and other activities related to the review and oversight of permitted activities. The VRWJPO may also use escrow dollars for costs it incurred for site review and engineering services during the development of permitted activities. Actual costs include all VRWJPO staff time and any outside consultant costs and printing, copying and mailing costs. VRWJPO staff time shall be charged at a rate of \$90 per hour.

If at any time the actual costs should exceed the escrowed amount, the applicant shall remit additional funds into the escrow fund when requested by the VRWJPO. If the applicant fails to replenish the escrow as requested, the VRWJPO may revoke the permit or withhold the certificate of completion until such time as the escrow is replenished. Any remaining funds in the escrow at the conclusion of the project shall be refundable to the applicant when all actual costs are paid and the administration of the escrow has been completed.

Alternative Tabular Format

Escrow Amounts

Activity Size	General grading (non-agricultural), new driveway	Accessory building (Residential, agricultural)	Residential (Individual single-family home)	Other Residential Development	Industrial, Commercial, Recreational, or other development
< 1 acre but triggers one or more permit criteria	\$450	\$450 - \$675	\$675 - \$900	\$900	\$675 - \$900
Between 1 and 5 acres, but < 1 acre new impervious, no drainage or floodplain alterations	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$1,800	\$1,800
Land disturbance > 5 acres, or site creates > 1 acre of new impervious, or site has a drainage alteration, or site has a floodplain alteration	\$2,700	\$2,700	\$2,700	\$2,700	\$2,700

Ranges shown to be at the discretion of the VRWJPO based on low or high potential for water quality impacts

Security Amounts

Activity Size	General grading (non-agricultural), new driveway	Accessory building (Residential, agricultural)	Residential (Individual single-family home)	Other Residential Development	Industrial, Commercial, Recreational, or other development
< 1 acre but triggers one or more permit criteria	N/A				
Between 1 and 5 acres, but < 1 acre new impervious, no drainage or floodplain alterations	N/A			\$500/ac when draining to non-trout stream; \$1,000/ac when draining to DNR- designated trout streams	
Land disturbance > 5 acres, or site creates > 1 acre of new impervious, or site has a drainage alteration, or site has a floodplain alteration	\$2,500/ac when draining to non-trout streams (up to \$100,000 maximum); \$4,000/ac when draining to DNR-designated trout streams (up to \$160,000 maximum)				



Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

4100 220th St. W., Suite 103, Farmington, MN 55024

Date: February 25, 2021
To: Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board
From: Staff
Subject: Joint Powers Organization Expenses

Agenda Item 5
February 2021

Expenses from the invoices submitted between December 17, 2020 and January 19, 2021 totalled \$144,602.44

The invoices submitted between January 20, 2021 and February 16, 2021 are listed below:

<u>Invoice</u>	<u>Vendor</u>		<u>Amount</u>
January 2021	Dakota County Staff Time	\$	37,856.56
807729	PCard Zabel: WebHosting Pad	\$	18.99
IN26745	Scott County	\$	887.76
2010741175	U of M Regents	\$	3,680.64
3070	Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District	\$	2,753.98
2020-291	Scott County SWCD	\$	13,250.59
202012224014	City of Hastings	\$	92,300.00
815835	ECM Publishers	\$	119.00
I151422902	Conserva Irrigation	\$	2,000.00
I151422906	Conserva Irrigation	\$	800.00
I151422907	Conserva Irrigation	\$	3,000.00
I151422910	Conserva Irrigation	\$	500.00
I151422908	Conserva Irrigation	\$	3,000.00
21-108011b	144Design	\$	95.00
21-62002	144Design	\$	275.00
202101204133	City of Hastings	\$	10,703.74
Total expense as approved on February 25, 2021		\$	171,241.26

Action Requested: Approve all above expenses as presented on February 25, 2021

6a. Adoption of an Amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section

Meeting Date: 2/25/2021
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Melissa Bokman Ermer
Telephone: 952-496-8887
Prepared by: Mark Zabel
Reviewed by: N/A

N/A

**PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

- Adoption of an Amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section.

SUMMARY

An existing dam structure located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 10, New Market Township, Scott County, is in imminent threat of failure. Built 50 years ago, the structure converted a pastured, Type 1/2 wetland into a Type 4/5 open water wetland with a 24- acre pool area. This pool serves to improve water quality in the Vermillion River by providing increased storage and retention of runoff from its 238-acre watershed. Increased retention time allows settling and immobilization of sediment and nutrients. It also serves to reduce runoff volumes and peak discharge rates, which reduces potential for scouring and erosion of downstream channels.

The existing outlet structure is beyond its design life and is in a serious state of disrepair. The earthen berm structure remains intact; however, there are signs of deterioration and its exact construction in terms of soils, height relative to spillway, freeboard, etc., are unknown at this time. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the neither the berm nor the outlet pipe meet current practice standards and specifications.

If the berm and outlet structure are not reconstructed, catastrophic failure is imminent. An estimated 57 acre-feet of water will be released immediately with an outlet breach, likely resulting in significant scouring of the receiving outlet ditch and the Vermillion River (Reach 520, in Scott County) approximately 2500' downstream. The primary purpose of this project is to not only maintain but improve the water quality benefits provided by the existing structure.

The Bemis Wetland Project will be added to Figure 7.2.1: Upper Main Stem Subwatershed Management Plan, Page 112, under 7.2 Upper Main Stem Subwatershed with an original scenario budget of \$30,000. This will increase the planned Ten Year Total budget from \$2,387,720 to \$2,417,720. In addition, it will be added to Figure 7.10.1: Implementation Plan Table, Page 121, under Land and Water Treatment, Goal A with a budget amount of \$30,000 for 2021. This will increase the planned Annual Totals and Totals Funded Through Levy on page 122 for 2021 from \$1,136,975 to \$1,166,975.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the proposed amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section to include the proposed wetland outlet restoration project.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

Project would be funded through grant funding or existing budgeted CIP.

RESOLUTION

6a. Adoption of an Amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section

WHEREAS, The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District reported need for a project to restore a functional outlet on a 24-acre open water wetland in New Market Township, Scott County; and

WHEREAS, the project did not appear in the 2016-2025 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation Section; and

WHEREAS, the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District applied for grant funding through the Minnesota Board or Water and Soil Resources Watershed Based Implementation Funding Program which requires projects be identified in an eligible local water management plan; and

an amendment to the 2016-2025 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan has been requested adding the Bemis Wetland Project to the Implementation Section; and

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing on the proposed amendment was published in the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization newspapers of record; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment was distributed to review agencies for a required 30-day review; and

WHEREAS, no negative comments were received in regard to the proposed amendment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) adopts the amendment adding the Bemis Wetland Project to Figure 7.2.1: Upper Main Stem Subwatershed Management Plan, Page 112, under 7.2 Upper Main Stem Subwatershed with an original scenario budget of \$30,000..

6b. Progress Update on a Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township

Meeting Date: 2/25/2021
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: John Stelzner
Telephone: 651-480-7779
Prepared by: Mark Zabel
Reviewed by: N/A

N/A

**PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

- Progress update on a wetland restoration in Castle Rock Township.

SUMMARY

The Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan includes a sub-goal to “protect, enhance, and restore wetlands” under Goal A: Protect or restore water quality in lakes, streams, and wetlands. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO), in partnership with Dakota County and the Minnesota Board of Water Resources (BWSR), is restoring a wetland within the Vermillion River Watershed creating a wetland bank in the process.

Dakota County (the County), the VRWJPO, and the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) collaboratively identified drained wetland areas with a high potential for wetland restoration that could provide watershed benefits. The SWCD, under agreement with the VRWJPO, completed a landscape assessment to produce a drained wetland inventory.

The SWCD worked with landowners to develop interest in the possibility of wetland restorations through available programs including the potential for development of “wetland banking.” Wetland banking allows for the creation of “wetland credits” on restored wetlands that meet specific restoration criteria. Created wetland credits can be traded in replacement of equivalent wetland acres impacted at another site. Wetland bank areas must be protected permanently under easement.

A wetland restoration on a property in Castle Rock Township is being implemented. Approximately 100 acres of wetland mitigation credits could be established with project certification. The cost to establish the State wetland bank conservation easement includes an estimated \$964,700 in easement acquisition costs and \$700,000 in construction, seeding, maintenance, and five years of monitoring, for a total project cost estimate of approximately \$1,664,700.

The VRWJPO provided \$500,000 from its Capital Improvement budget and the County will provide up to \$450,000 from the Environmental Resources Department’s Capital Improvement Program budget. The BWSR is providing engineering, project construction oversight and administration of the project. Dakota County, with assistance of the VRWJPO, will provide long-term maintenance. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) allocated \$500,000 for a watershed wetland bank project in its VRWJPO 2017 Budget. The VRWJPB also adopted a Wetland Banking Policy describing its activity associated with wetland banking. (See Attachment A)

RECOMMENDATION

None.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

Information only.

Wetland Banking Policy for the VRWJPO

This policy generally refers to provisions within the Wetland Conservation Act (as amended) and its implementation according to Minnesota Rules Chapter 8420 “Board of Water and Soil Resources Wetland Conservation” (herein referred to as “the Rule”).

The purposes of the Wetland Conservation Act as listed in the Purpose section of the Rule (8420.0100 Subp. 1) are to:

- A. achieve no net loss in the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota’s existing wetlands;
- B. increase the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota’s wetlands by restoring or enhancing diminished or drained wetlands;
- C. avoid direct or indirect impacts from activities that destroy or diminish the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of wetlands; and
- D. replace wetland values where avoidance of activity is not feasible and prudent.

The Rule identifies the following as its method (8420.0100 Subp. 2): “The regulatory provisions of the Wetland Conservation Act advance the purpose in this part by requiring persons proposing to impact a wetland to first, attempt to avoid the impact; second, attempt to minimize the impact, and finally, replace any impacted area with another wetland of at least equal function and value.”

To accomplish this the Rule sets further procedures and standards that must be followed. The Rule and the Act provide minimum standards. Part 8420.0233 provides that: “Local government units may require more procedures and more wetland protection, but not less”. To that end, this policy affects part 8420.0522 of the Rule as it applies to Replacement Standards. Although this policy does not replace the Rule it does supersede its effect in **requiring replacement credits as applied through Wetland Banking (parts 8420.0700 through 8420.0820) to occur within the Vermillion River Watershed for wetland impacts occurring in the Vermillion River Watershed as long as there are wetland bank replacement credits available from a wetland bank within the Watershed.**

Currently there are no wetland bank credits generally available for sale within the Vermillion River Watershed (all available wetland bank credits within the Watershed are either held by public entities for their own replacement purposes or are reserved by others). Recent applications for replacement credits through wetland banking have applied available replacement credits from wetland banks outside the Watershed and County. To be more effective in the implementation of the purposes identified above, as well as in implementing

goals of the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan, the VRWJPO is actively pursuing the development of wetland bank opportunities in the Vermillion River Watershed. The VRWJPO will offer wetland credits for sale on the open market upon the successful completion of a wetland restoration creating a wetland bank where the VRWJPO participates financially in its development. Revenues from the sale of wetland credits will be applied to further restoration of wetlands and development of wetland bank credits for future sale, thus developing a revolving fund to restore wetlands within the Watershed.

The VRWJPO will manage the sale of credits according to the Rule (Parts 8420.0745 through 8420.0755).

Price of wetland credits managed for sale by the VRWJPO shall be set as follows:

When credits are being sold to replace wetland impacts which occurred within the Vermillion River Watershed the price shall be set at 4.5 times the estimated average market value for class 2A agricultural lands graded A, B, or C in Dakota County up to a maximum of \$37,000 per acre.

The price of credits sold for replacement of wetland impacts occurring outside the Vermillion River Watershed shall be set at 5.5 times the estimated average market value for class 2A agricultural lands graded A, B, or C in Dakota County up to a maximum of \$45,000 per acre.

The minimum price at which credits will be sold for replacement of wetland impacts will be the sum of the cost to produce the wetland bank credits (easement and restoration, etc.) plus all fees associated with the wetland bank (as per BWSR Wetland Mitigation Fee Policy) plus \$500 per acre.

6c. Presentation on Current Cost-Share Programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Date: 2/25/2021
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Curt Coudron
Telephone: 651-480-7774
Prepared by: Mark Zabel
Reviewed by: N/A

N/A

**PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

- Presentation on current cost-share programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District

SUMMARY

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) annually engages with the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) to provide funding for services that implement the mission and goals of the VRWJPO through programs managed via the DCSWCD Board of Supervisors and their staff. One of the key programs of the DCSWCD that provides conservation projects are implemented is their various cost-share programs (see Attachment A). These cost-share programs provide partial funding in partnership with landowners who voluntarily agree to complete conservation projects on their properties. The VRWJPO provides funding to support these programs to provide service delivery efficiency as opposed to developing separate conservation delivery programs serving the same purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

None.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

Information only.



LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT PROCESS

The Landscaping for Clean Water Grant program makes it easy for Dakota County residents to plan and install native gardens, raingardens, and native shoreline plantings.

Just follow the steps below!

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER



Dakota County Soil and
Water Conservation District

- 1. WORKSHOPS** Complete a Landscaping for Clean Water Intro Workshop Class & Design Course and receive help developing site specific project plans and cost estimate.
- 2. APPLICATION** Submit an application, project plans, and cost estimate to Dakota County SWCD for approval prior to beginning installation.
- 3. MEETING** Schedule an on-site meeting and project layout with Dakota County SWCD prior to beginning installation.
- 4. INSTALLATION** Install your Landscaping for Clean Water Project per approved plan! Dakota County SWCD will come out to
- 5. RECEIVE \$250** You will be awarded a \$250 grant from Dakota County SWCD upon project completion.

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT DEADLINES

	Application	Project Completion*
Round 1	April 21, 2021	July 9, 2021
Round 2	May 26, 2021	August 27, 2021
Round 3	July 14, 2021	October 15, 2021

* Grant automatically expires if the project is not completed by this date

Visit www.dakotaSWCD.org for additional information.



Raingarden



Native Garden



Native Shoreline
Planting

**14 YEARS OF CLEAN WATER
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Workshop Participants 4,765

Projects Completed 625



CITIZEN CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Erosion and Slope Stabilization
- Gully, Wetland, Lake or Stream Restorations
- Sediment Basins
- Bioretention Practices
- Shoreline Stabilizations

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777

COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

Up to \$5,000 of cost share funding may be available to Dakota County property owners for qualifying (non-agricultural) water quality projects that preserve or restore natural resources.

The Citizen Conservation Stewardship (CCS) program supports smaller conservation practices on individual properties by providing technical and cost share assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$5,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant for up to 75% of the actual project cost.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Water Quality Improvement
- Benefits to Wetlands, Lakes and Streams
- Soil Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Public Benefit / Public Outreach
- Innovative Applications
- Collaboration With Other Landowners or Organizations



CONSERVATION INITIATIVE FUNDING PROGRAM



COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

Up to \$25,000 of cost share funding may be available to install conservation practices that reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality above the minimum measures required by the regulating agencies.

The Conservation Initiative Funding (CIF) program supports larger conservation practices on commercial or multiple properties by providing technical and cost share assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$25,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant up to 75% of the actual project cost.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Water Quality Improvement
- Benefits to Wetlands, Lakes and Streams
- Soil Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Public Benefit / Public Outreach
- Innovative Applications
- Collaboration With Other Landowners or Organizations

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- New or Redevelopment with Low Impact Development Practices
- Stormwater Retrofit with Best Management Practices
- Erosion and Slope Stabilization
- Gully, Wetland, Lake or Stream Restorations
- Bioretention Practices
- Shoreline Stabilizations

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP



COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

Up to \$50,000 of cost share funding may be available to install bioretention and other stormwater Best Management Practices at public facilities in Dakota County to improve water quality above the minimum measures required by the regulating agencies.

The Community Conservation Partnership (CCP) supports public landowners to implement TMDL and local water management plans by providing technical assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$50,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant for up to 75% of the actual cost. The applicant's contribution can be based on in-kind value.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Subwatershed Pollutant Load Modeling to Quantify Water Quality Benefit
- Priority Sites Having Direct Discharge Without Treatment
- Values Comparison - Most Benefit for the Least Cost
- Priority Locations in Critical Watershed Areas
- Installation Timing
- Identified Project in a TMDL or Local Water Plan

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications must be submitted by March 15th, May 15th, or July 15th of each year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Bioretention
- Infiltration
- Filtration
- Soil Amendments
- Rooftop Disconnect
- Reduced Impervious Surface Areas
- Porous Pavements
- Thermal Impact Prevention and Mitigation Practices
- Snowmelt Treatment
- Stormwater Recycling
- Best Management Practices

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



INCENTIVE PAYMENT PRACTICES PROGRAM



COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

The Incentive Payment Practices (IPP) program provides funding for the voluntary establishment of conservation projects. All projects must demonstrate a water quality improvement and comply with local, state, and federal regulations. SWCD staff will work with applicants on project planning and design, and to submit a final project application.

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide water quality benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the amount of funding and staff time available.

PROJECT FUNDING EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Up to 75% cost share funding for installation of conservation projects.
- Up to 90% cost share for projects in areas designated as “priority locations” by the District Board.
- Up to \$300 per acre, per year for up to 15 years, for filter strips.
- Up to \$150 per acre, per year for up to 15 years, for harvestable filter strips.
- \$25 per acre (single year contract) or \$35 per acre per year (multi-year contract) for cover crops
- \$20 per acre (single year contract) or \$30 per acre per year (multi-year contract) for harvestable covers

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications will be ranked and scored periodically throughout the year.
- Cover Crop applications are accepted year-round

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Grassed Waterways
- Water and Sediment Control Basins
- Critical Area Seeding
- Diversions
- Streambank Stabilization
- Filter Strips
- Harvestable Filter Strips
- Feedlot Improvements
- Cover Crops
- Harvestable Covers
- Perennial Crops

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



COVER CROP INCENTIVES



SEEDING PLANS & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cover crops are used to accomplish many goals such as reducing compaction, fixing nitrogen, suppressing weeds, reducing erosion, or providing additional forage. Common cover crops in Dakota County are cereal rye, oats, tillage radish, clover and winter wheat. One or more cover crop species may be selected based on specific goals.

SWCD staff can help you create a cover crop seeding plan with your goals in mind. Staff can also provide technical assistance and information on planting methods, termination timing, and herbicide and pest control decisions.

INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could be eligible to receive:

- \$25 per acre under a 1-year contract (max \$2,500 or 100 acres)
- \$35 per acre per year under a multi-year contract (max \$10,500 or 100 acres)

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide surface water and groundwater benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the funding and staff time available. Please contact the SWCD for specific eligibility requirements and program details.

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted year-round

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:

- Reduced soil erosion
- Reduced soil compaction
- Enhanced ability of soil to infiltrate water
- Reduced weed growth
- Increased nutrients in the soil
- Increased numbers of desirable insects and micro-fauna
- Potential yield increases

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



HARVESTABLE COVER INCENTIVES



WHAT ARE HARVESTABLE COVERS?

Harvestable covers are vegetative cover on cropland for protection from erosion and reduction of nutrient losses to groundwater. Harvestable covers are intended to provide soil and groundwater protection throughout as much of the year as possible. Harvestable covers allow for harvesting of a crop, which can provide income while protecting water resources. Examples of harvestable covers include winter camelina, intermediate wheat grass, winter wheat, or other crops that provide overwinter cover. One or more cover crop species may be selected based on specific goals.

INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could be eligible to receive:

- \$20 per acre under a 1-year contract using a winter annual (max \$2,000 or 100 acres)
- \$25 per acre per year under a multi-year contract using a winter annual (max \$2,500 or 100 acres)
- \$25 per acre per year under a multi-year contract using a perennial (max \$12,500 or 100 acres)

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide surface water and groundwater benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the funding and staff time available. Please contact the SWCD for specific eligibility requirements and program details.

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted year-round

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:

- Reduced soil erosion
- Groundwater protection
- Reduced soil compaction
- Enhanced ability of soil to infiltrate water
- Reduced weed growth
- Increased nutrients in the soil
- Increased numbers of desirable insects and micro-fauna
- Ability to generate income while protecting surface and groundwater

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777

NATIVE PRAIRIE RESTORATION

COST SHARE



FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR

NATIVE PRAIRIE ESTABLISHMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Native plants provide multiple benefits to local water quality, soil health, and pollinator species. Cost-share funding is available for the installation of native vegetation in Dakota County that protects surface waters and groundwater, reduces erosion, or provides wildlife habitat. Project funds are also available for projects that enhance existing native vegetation to increase habitat quality for pollinators and wildlife. Native Prairie Restorations must be a minimum of 1/2 acre in size.

Funding is sponsored by Dakota County through the Environmental Legacy Fund.

PROJECT FUNDING:

- Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could receive up to 75% cost share funding:
 - Up to \$1,000/acre for the enhancement of existing native vegetation with more pollinator-friendly species
 - Up to \$2,000/acre for the installation of native prairie grasses
 - Up to \$3,000/acre for the installation of new native prairie vegetation that includes grasses **and** pollinator-friendly forbs

All project applications are subject to available funding and SWCD Board approval. Funding is based on a percentage of the actual installation costs.

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year and will be reviewed and ranked on a monthly basis.

PROJECT PRIORITIES:

- Stabilizing erodible soils
- Filtering runoff to waterways or wetlands
- Protecting groundwater
- Improving wildlife habitat, particularly for pollinators

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Site preparation, seed, and planting of native vegetation
- Enhancement of existing native vegetation with pollinator species

PROGRAM PARTNER:



For more information, call the
Dakota County Soil and Water
Conservation District at
(651) 480-7777



Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission Meeting

February 10, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.

Zoom Videoconference

WPC Members in Attendance

Mark Henry Chuck Clanton
Tony Wotzka Carolyn Miller
Ken Betzold James Kotz
Andy Riesgraf

Staff in Attendance

Mark Zabel, VRWJPO
Mark Ryan, VRWJPO
Paula Liepold, VRWJPO
Travis Thiel, VRWJPO

Others in Attendance

Curt Coudron, Dakota County SWCD
John Stelzner, Dakota County SWCD
Georg Fischer, Dakota County

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Henry at 3:30 p.m.
Members Hamrick, Borton and Betzold were absent.

2. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None

3. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Henry asked for a motion to approve the agenda as provided in the packet.

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Miller, to approve the agenda. The agenda was unanimously approved by a 6-0 roll call.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Kotz, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021, meeting, as distributed. The minutes were unanimously approved by a 6-0 roll call vote.

5. Business Items

Chair Henry welcomed new Commissioners Riesgraf and Kotz to the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission. Commissioners and some staff introduced themselves and their backgrounds for the new Commissioners.

a. Progress Update on Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township

Chair Henry introduced the Item. Mark Zabel provided the background on the VRWJPO financial participation in the development of the wetland restoration creating a wetland bank and wetland bank policy for the VRWJPO. John Stelzner of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District presented an update on the progress for construction and seeding activities for restoration of the wetland and how wetland credits will be generated over time. Wetland credits are released upon a certification schedule that is highly reliant on performance standards for planned vegetation establishment in the wetland. The wetland restoration is taking place in Castle Rock Township, in the South Branch subwatershed of the Vermillion River. The wetland easement for this project is 120 acres, nearly 115 of which could become certified as wetland bank. The VRWJPO would receive about 1/3 of certified credits. Credits are released in stages with certification at each stage. Another benefit of the restoration is the habitat it creates. Mark Ryan pointed out that credits generated will be shared between the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Dakota County, and the VRWJPO, and so a portion of the credits will be used for replacement of wetland impacts caused by transportation projects within the watershed. Burning will be a part of the management approach for maintaining the restored wetland and is good for controlling invasives and promoting growth of native vegetation.

b. Presentation on Current Draft Cost-Share Programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District

Chair Henry introduced the item and turned the presentation over to Curt Coudron of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District. Curt described how the Dakota SWCD and the VRWJPO jurisdictions cover much of the same ground geographically and have much of the same mission and goals in pursuing conservation efforts. The VRWJPO and the Dakota SWCD act in partnership to prevent unnecessary redundancies and improve efficiency of service. Part of the services provided include conservation projects with landowners through Cost-Share Programs. There is about \$80,000 dollars allocated to projects through the Joint Powers Agreement between the VRWJPO and Dakota SWCD for 2021. Practices are put in according to specific design standards. Projects go before the Dakota SWCD Board for approval before construction begins. Dakota SWCD staff certify construction and requests for cost share payment go to the Dakota SWCD Board for payment approval. Programs include:

- Landscaping for Clean Water (Cost-share up to \$250 per project)
- Citizen Conservation Stewards (Cost-share up to 75% of project cost, \$5,000 limit)
- Conservation Initiative Funding (Cost-share up to 75% of project cost, \$25,000 limit)
- Community Partners Funding (Cost-share up to 75% of project cost, \$50,000 limit)
- Incentive Payment Practices (Cost-share up to rates vary)

There is a new cost-share initiative this year which is Harvestable Covers which provides incentive for planting cover crops that can be harvested. This is currently in draft form awaiting approval by the Dakota SWCD Board. The initiative targets providing vegetation that covers the ground year-round. Existing cover crop programs generally limit to crops that are not harvested for profit. This program would allow harvest while the cover remains in place. Payments are graded less than payment for cover crop and contracts may be single or multiple year. A property can only enter the program once to provide incentive for multiple year contracts.

Curt also highlighted several projects that were implemented in the VRWJPO in 2020 through the cost-share programs identified above.

Commissioner Betzold joined the meeting.

Chair Henry thanked the Dakota SWCD and their staff for the good work that they do and have done over the years. Commissioner Clanton asked about the harvestable covers program and whether that extends to pastures and other existing cover areas. Curt explained that this would apply to new planting areas. There is a five-year contract cap. There is also a 100-acre cap per contract. Commissioner Clanton

noted that this program does not provide incentive or reward for those who are already doing the right thing.

6. Updates

a. Chairperson's Report

Chair Henry commented that he has been involved in obtaining a conservation easement and maintaining a portion of the Dakota County Fairgrounds over several years through grants. The easement area wet mesic prairie has been burned several times. Unfortunately the burns have not been effective at controlling invasive tree growth. To control the trees is requiring manual removal of the unwanted trees (Willows, Cottonwoods, Buckthorn, etc.)

b. Staff Updates

Zabel noted a couple of housekeeping needs. The Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission has the authority to set the dates and times for their meetings. The meetings were changed several years ago to the current meeting date and time for regular meetings, the second Wednesday of the month from 3:30PM to 5:30PM. The meeting date and time can be changed to accommodate needs of the members. Commissioners agreed to keep the meeting on the second Wednesday of the month, but move the time to start the meeting at 4:00PM. **Motion by Betzold, second by Riesgraf, to set the regular meeting date and time as the second Wednesday of the month beginning at 4:00PM. Motion carried on a 7-0 roll call vote.** The Commissioners are eligible to receive a per diem of \$35 for attendance at Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission meetings. With COVID and the meeting restrictions we have been lax in tracking and making payments. To address this Zabel asks that Commissioners send him an email indicating if they wish to receive per diem. Zabel will follow up and get payment arranged and processed for those that request per diem.

Paula Liepold asks that the new Commissioners send photos for use on the Website.

Mark Ryan introduced himself and described his role with the VRWJPO and welcomed new members to the WPC.

Zabel announced that the Public Outreach and Communications position (Jen's position) has been approved to be filled. Zabel is still working through the finalization of the posting of the position which should happen soon.

7. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Miller, second by Commissioner Clanton, to adjourn the meeting at 4:51 p.m. The motion passed on a 7-0 roll-call vote.