

Members In attendance:

Stevenson, Gordon	WI DNR	Koepke, Al	Producer, PDPW
Billings, Corinne	WI DNR	Zimmerman, Paul	WI Farm Bureau
Parsons, Tim	WI DNR	Murphy, Pat	NRCS
Pfender, John	WI DNR	Klingberg, Kevin	UW Discovery Farm
Kirsch, Kevin	WI DNR	Masterpole, Dan	Chippewa County
Lueders, Laura	WI DNR	Calkins, Kurt	Columbia County
Cihlar, Sandi	Producer	Cleereman, Greg	Marinette County
Castelnuovo, Richard	DATCP	Schuster, Bill	Door County
Nowak, Pete	UW (WBI)	Sebo, Paul	Washington County

Gordon Stevenson started the meeting with an explanation of the advisory committee process, ground rules, rules timeline, and introductions.

John Pfender presented slides explaining an overview of key issues. The NR 153 presentation is available at <http://dnr.wi.gov/runoff/rules/nr153/rulerevision.htm>

Initial Advisory Committee Comments

The following ideas were collected from the initial section of the meeting where people expressed their key ideas.

- More incentives are needed to get counties to fully implement NR 151
 - Counties are under budget caps, there are limits to what a county can do without additional resources.
 - Need longer term projects to provide more stability
- In general, NR 153 seems to be taking a good direction; positive changes
- TMDL implementation is still a grey area to many.
- Like watershed focus and opportunities through various NPS categories. But, concerned setting limits on project size. The real issue is whether the BMPs being installed will address the water quality need. Why put a maximum on watershed size?
- Need to discuss further whether it makes sense to place limits on the amount of grant money that a single grantee can get in any one year.

DNR handed out a list of multiple grant awards made since the beginning of the TRM Program. In some years, a single county garnered as much as 35% of the grant funds. WI DNR was initially concerned that counties with multiple grants would not be able to get their projects done, but an analysis of the information available showed that counties that got a lot of projects were just as likely to get the work done as counties that got one project. However, DNR is still concerned that it may not be good for the program to have so much of the resources going to one county. A cap would put a limit on the percent of the total funds that any one applicant could receive.

- NR 153 should facilitate solving water quality problems. This is best done by targeting resources. The draft rule seems to place too much emphasis on policies that allow the Department to manage the program and not enough on policies that might be more effective at addressing water quality problems. There is a difference between managing the programs and solving problems on the ground.
- What is needed is a program with strong evaluation criteria so we can make needed program adjustments as we go along. Need to share those evaluation criteria with grantees from the beginning. Need more weight placed on feedback loops, evaluation, and efficiency.

WI DNR stated that there are evaluation criteria in the rule that will be used to determine whether a large-scale project gets the remainder of the grant funds for the third year. Is this adequate?

- Committee members asked how DNR would be deciding how the available dollars be split amongst four categories. One member thought we should pro-rate funds based on mix of applications in a prior year.

DNR indicated that for 2007-2009 there is \$10.7 M for TRM. Projecting this amount forward for a new program, it would be reasonable to assume about \$6.7 M for TMDL categories and \$4 M for NPS categories. All 319 dollars must go to TMDL categories. Don't want to make hard and fast allocations in the rule. Want flexibility to make determination based upon number (percentage) of applications and our water quality needs.

- Would like more information/discussion about NPS projects.
- Need some more information about areas eligible for TMDL projects. Is there a map? Also, there are questions about the assessment methods DNR uses to identify impaired waters.

DNR agreed to take about 15-30 minutes at the next meeting to provide more information about the impaired waters and TMDL program.

- Should be focusing funds in areas where the pollution sources are clustered and resources are responsive. This is what the WBI did.
- Too much focus is being put on 303(d)/TMDL areas. What about non-impaired waters, or preventing waters from degrading to 303(d) status
- Are funds being set aside for NODs? Is there any value in making a fifth category in TRM for NODs?

WI DNR: For 2008, WI DNR has reserved \$300,000 for the new NOD funding program. Have funding for NODs under the new program for both years of the biennium. We are ramping up process to select projects under the new NOD funding program. Remember, we can fund NOD under regular TRM process as well. We could send NOD to top of the TRM process through scoring process if we wanted to. This is still a potential. We need to determine which program a

project should be funded (NR 243, EQIP, NOD, etc.). We need to feel ourselves through it. DNR is hesitant to put too much money into it until we have a better process defined and more experience in implementing it.

- DNR proposes to establish a screening requirement for grants eligibility based on whether or not a county has an adequate NR 151 implementation program. In the proposal, the criterion for determining the adequacy of the local program is related to the LWRMP. This needs more discussion and clarification.
- What sort of cost will be associated with implementing TMDLs? What BMPs will be required to meet TMDLs?
- We need consistency among agencies. As DNR and DATCP develop cost share policies, need to be as consistent as possible so we do not have two different sets of cost-share rates. Also, need to coordinate NR 151 implementation with all agencies, including NRCS, so we do not counteract each other.
- Are the BMPs going to make a difference?
 - Cost-effective
 - BMP evaluation. Best available technology
- What will be the implications to landowner and efforts of linking dollars to TMDLs
- What will be the interaction with cost-share programs (CSP, EQIP, etc.) We need to ensure maximum flexibility
- Like scoring changes
- Need to discuss whether we should continue to give the highest ranked project in each DNR region a project, regardless of the score. Some of these projects were ranked near the bottom of the list. Consider adding another filter so that certain criteria would have to be met in order for a project to get this regional boost.
- We need an exemption to be able to go above the grant cap (\$150,000) for high cost BMPs when needed to meet state standards and prohibitions.
- Interested in discussing project substitutions in cases where the project goals have been met and funds remain in the grant. This needs to be a quick process.
- So much of the DNRs decisions about scoring take place outside the rule. Would like to review the proposed application materials to see how will they change
- Recognize federal watershed programs (CSP) running concurrently
- Aim for consistency
- Need to develop a process that leads to H2O quality improvement.
- Need connection between TRM grant projects and priorities set forth in LWRMPs.