



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday April 17, 2019

Agenda Item

Item 5. G. - Request from Minnesota River Congress

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

Mr. Scott Sparlin reached out to the LMRWD on behalf of the Minnesota River Congress. He and others from the Congress have been working to get water management agencies to agree to manage flow of stormwater. Specifically, the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts has been featuring water storage at each of its regional meetings and Area 6 (which includes 11 counties) is considering a resolution that would make water retention and storage a priority for all SWCD's in the region. The resolution would:

- Endorses the initiative of the Minnesota River Congress as it pertains to increasing more water storage on the landscape.
- Promotes water storage projects within districts.
- Advocates, along with the Minnesota River Congress, to secure funding targeted specifically for water storage in the Minnesota River Watershed.

Area 5 is doing looking at similar actions. In many counties, SWCD's are also the drainage authorities. There is a lot of interest in water retention and storage as evidenced by the attendance at the Water Storage Forum in Mankato on April 4th. There were probably 200 people in attendance, many from drainage authorities.

Mr. Sparlin has asked the LMRWD to fund these efforts. He is looking for \$5000 (approximately \$400/month) for each of the next two years. The money would be used to fund his time coordinating organizational activities and cover meeting expenses to amass support and bring experts on board to create the language.

He will be working to get legislation passed relating to water retention and storage, and funding for projects. His plan is to have a bill with bi-partisan support ready for the 2020-21 legislative session. He has found authors for legislation and will be working on the language, so that it is ready for introduction. The legislation will be aimed at getting funding for retention and storage projects.

The 2019 Budget has \$7,600 in Education & Outreach for a project with the Friends of the Minnesota Valley. The Friends project was to hold education meeting in each of the Counties in the Minnesota River Basin. This project fits with the goals and intentions of the project.

Item 5. G. - Minnesota River Congress Request

Executive Summary

April 17, 2019

Page 2

Attachments

Agenda from MASWCD Area VI Regional meeting

letter from Scott Sparlin on behalf of the MN River Congress

Recommended Action

Motion to authorize MN River Congress project



Area VI MASWCD

Serving the 11 SWCD's in South Central Minnesota

Renville, McLeod, Sibley, Nicollet, Le Sueur, Brown, Blue Earth, Watonwan, Waseca, Martin, and Faribault.

AREA VI Meeting

Monday, April 22, 2019

American Legion Post 132

13 South Minnesota Street

New Ulm, MN 56073

507-354-4016

DRAFT

OFFICERS

Director

Mark Schnobrich

24209 Unit Ave
Hutchinson, MN 55350
320-583-1460
arborcon@hutchtel.net
McLeod SWCD

Co-Director

Bob Nielsen

19336 331st
Ave
Green Isle, MN 55338
bob.nielsen@ufcmn.com
m 507-326-5695
Sibley SWCD

Secretary/Treasurer

Mark Koenig

80656 County Rd 8
Buffalo Lake, MN 55314
kingcat80656@live.com
320-833-2313
Renville SWCD

MASWCD's purpose is to provide for education, communication, cooperation, and coordination between and among its member districts and affiliated partners, in order that the quality of the natural resources and environment within our area will be maintained and improved to the greatest possible extent.

- 9:00 am Registration**
- 9:30 Welcome – Charles Mathews, Vice Chair of the Mcleod SWCD**
- 9:32 Call to order, Pledge, Roll Call, Agenda, Minutes, - Mark Schnobrich,**
- 9:40 Treasurers Reports: Mark Koenig**
- 9:50 Area VI update on Conservation Scholarship – Mark Koenig**
- 10:05 Reports and MASWCD Update**
BSWR –
NRCS –
MACDE –
MASWCD –
- 10:20 Water Storage: Scales, Practices, Partnerships – Al Kean/ Chief Eng., BSWR**
Surface and subsurface water storage (detention and retention) involves various conservation practices at different scales from field to watershed. Local water planning, as well as state and federal technical and financial assistance programs, often involve SWCDs and landowners in partnerships with drainage authorities and other LGUs. An overview for consideration and discussion.
- 11:00 Minnesota River Congress – Director Coalition for a Clean Mn River**
Minnesota River Congress is spearheading an effort to secure significant funding specifically for surface water storage in the Minnesota River Watershed. What do they feel we need to do to achieve more storage.
- 11:15 Izaak Walton League – Don Arnosti/ Cons. Issues Program Director/ Executive Director**
Private Conservation groups are trying to achieve the same results in water storage. Can private / public / non-governmental units all work together. Don will give us an idea as to how they are working to promote more water storage on public and private lands.
- 12:00 pm Lunch**
- 12:45 Panel Discussion - Scott Sparlin, Don Arnosti, Al Kean, Ryan Freitag/ Mcleod SWCD Director, Adam Griebe/ Farmer, Brownton, Minn.**
Let us discuss the meat and bones of how we might actually get our separate factions to work together to achieve more water storage on the land.
- 1:45 pm Area VI Directors Report– Mark Schnobrich / Adjourn**

Lower Minnesota River Watershed
Linda Loomis, Administrator
112 5th St. East, Suite 102
Chaska, MN 55318

Based on information compiled from numerous input meetings with key individuals and organizations from the entire region, The Minnesota River Congress has begun an important initiative. The MRC is now actively acquiring support from conservation program implementors and a broad coalition of organizations throughout the Minnesota River Basin. This is being done with the ultimate goal of creating a large pool of money to be used specifically to produce surface water storage on the landscape.

Meetings have begun and are in process with state legislators, SWCD's and Watershed Districts across the basin to discuss the potential for a bill to address this specific underfunded yet clearly identified and prioritized conservation initiative.

We appreciate your past support of our collective efforts and are asking for your support to continue our important work. We need funds to see this to its fruition. Would you be willing to be a partner by both endorsing the effort in letter form as well as contributing dollars to see it move forward?

Contact me any time at 507 276 2280 or sesparlin@gmail.com

Thank you for your most serious consideration

Scott Sparlin Coordinator/Facilitator, Minnesota River Congress
Executive Director, the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River