

**West Fork Des Moines River Watershed
Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Project
Semi-Annual Meeting
Thursday, December 11, 2014 – 10:10 am**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Amanda Schultz, Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) opened the meeting at 10:10 am. In attendance were Al Langseth and Kathy Henderschiedt, Nobles County; Andy Geiger and Jake Grages, Jackson County; Chris Bauer, Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); Brian Nyborg, Department of Natural Resources; Mark Hiles, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Katherine Pekarek-Scott, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); and Amanda Schultz, Catherine Sereg, and Jan Voit, HLWD.

2. West Fork Des Moines River (WFDNR) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Project PowerPoint Presentation

Amanda Schultz, WFDNR Watershed Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation that provided a project update since the last Semi-Annual Meeting, introduction to the new Watershed Coordinator, grant background, the role of partners, amendment update, watershed information, progress to date on the inspection process, what to expect in the future, and sought input on how to compile MinnFARM results.

The TMDL Implementation Project grant amendment was submitted on October 16 and is awaiting MPCA approval. There is approximately \$32,000 to appropriate. The money will be used to update contact information on the project brochures and provide a mass mailing to landowners with active feedlots within the watershed. The mass mailing will include information on manure storage, application, record keeping, and feedlot improvement ideas. The remainder of the money will be split equally and used to conduct feedlot fixes in Jackson, Murray, Nobles, and Cottonwood counties. The County Feedlot Officer (CFO) and Watershed Coordinator will decide how to use the money in each county.

Construction of the Clean Water Fund (CWF) Livestock Nutrient Reduction project is almost complete. The project, located in Murray County, included the construction of a cement manure stacking slab and seeding of a 3.65 acre grassed buffer strip. The feedlot is located on Beaver Creek and will provide both surface and ground water benefits by reducing annual Biological Oxygen Demand loading by 515 pounds and phosphorus loading by 45 pounds.

As of December 1, 2014, 419 feedlots have been inspected. This leaves a total of 173 feedlots remaining. The breakdown for the 419 inspected feedlots is as follows: Nobles County: 135 sites, Cottonwood County: 35 sites, Jackson County: 105 sites, and Murray County: 144 sites. Of the 419 feedlots inspected 55% are

open lots, 18% are total confinements or no discharge open lots, and 27% are deactivated, no open lots remaining, or sites with less than 10 animal units (AU) and not in shoreland.

The average MinnFARM index is 16.1. The index average has increased since the project began. The following average indexes have been reported during the past Semi-Annual Meetings: 6.1 on October 16, 2012; 8.3 on April 23, 2013; 9.5 on December 9, 2013; and 11.8 on June 17, 2014.

Of the 55% opens lots inspected so far, 113 sites have been compliant and 116 sites have not been compliant. A chart of indices for the 116 non-compliant sites was shown. The highest index was 100, and the second highest was 91. Both of these sites are undergoing feedlot fixes. The lowest index for a non-compliant site was 1. The majority of the indices are under 20. Indices under 10 are a low priority for completing feedlot improvements. When an index is in the teens or higher, the site should become a higher priority for implementing environmental upgrades.

The TMDL Implementation Project will be done in less than a year. It is important to keep in mind what activities still need to be completed before the end of the project. There are 173 more feedlot inspections yet to be conducted. If time permits, more sites may be visited than the 80% required by the project. Sites may also be re-inspected if the CFO or Watershed Coordinator feels it is necessary. All feedlot inspections will be completed by the end of June 2015 to ensure adequate time to complete the final report. There will be one last Semi-Annual Meeting held sometime in the spring of 2015. Inspection notes and MinnFARM results need to be compiled to submit with the final report. The final report is due on August 31, 2015. Discussion was held regarding the transition from the Delta database to Tempo. After February 10, CFOs will no longer have access to Delta. They will be trained on the new Tempo database in late March or early April, meaning there will be a six to eight week time period where CFOs are not able to access feedlot information. The CFOs will have to plan ahead to ensure that the transition does not interfere with feedlot inspections.

Discussion was held regarding what to cover in the last semi-annual meeting and how to compile the MinnFARM results for the final report. It was suggested that progress of feedlot improvements be provided at the last meeting. Inspection notes, compliance rating, and index for all inspections should all be included in the final report. All feedlot inventory information and the final report will be submitted to MPCA, who will then have possession of the information. CFOs would have access to feedlot inspection information after it is entered into the Delta or Tempo database. If the DNR or other government agencies request any information, MPCA could pull it for them.

The Advisory and Technical Committees need to determine what will happen once the project is complete. It should be decided if funding will be sought to complete feedlot improvements and if small operations, large operations, or both should be considered. It is possible that the Advisory Committee may decide to focus their efforts on manure application instead of open lot runoff. It should also be determined if bacteria is still a main concern for the WFDMR.

3. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Jan Voit
District Administrator