



**Board of Supervisors Special Meeting and Public Hearing
for the Becker County Local Water Plan
Monday, February 13, 2017**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Pavelko called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Roll Call and Introductions: Soil & Water staff: Peter Mead, Jen Wentz and Karl Koenig; Soil & Water supervisor's Tony Beck, Jerome Flottesmesch, Travis Schauer, Gene Pavelko and Kathy Stenger; Planning & Zoning Director Dylan Ramstad-Skoyles, and Keith Mernitz, eastern Becker County landowner, interested party and member of Trout Unlimited, Headwaters Chapter.

Meeting Purpose: This is the last step prior to submitting the Local Water Plan to the BWSR northern committee and then to BWSR board for final approval. This will then maintain funding for our local needs. Information heard today will need district approval before submittal.

MN Statute 103b obligates counties to update their water plan every 10 years. In June 2015 Becker County resolved to update the Water Plan and delegate authority to the Becker SWCD. Manager Mead has notified local groups and other agencies, made their recommendations as well as other edits and now has the final draft ready for approval and submission.

Roles and Responsibilities: Implementing the *Water Management Plan 2017-2027* will primarily be the responsibility of the County and the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The *Water Management Plan* is officially adopted by only the County and the SWCD. The following agencies play an important role in plan implementation but do not necessarily implement the plan.

- Municipalities and Townships, State and Federal Agencies, businesses, individuals and non-profit organizations
- Land owners, business owners, farmers and citizens of Becker County
- State Agencies such as BWSR, MPCA and DNR
- Townships and Municipalities
- City of Detroit Lakes
- Federal Agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Watershed Management Organizations such as Pelican River, Buffalo-Red, Wild Rice and Cormorant Lakes Watershed Districts

Public Hearing: 2017 Becker County Local Water Management Plan

The special meeting was recessed and the board opened the public hearing to allow for questions, concerns and additions to the 2017 Becker County Local Water Management Plan.

Plan Overview: Public engagement began with priority concern identification process. As required by Minnesota Statutes 103B.313, Becker Soil and Water Conservation sent notification of the plan update and invitation to submit priority concerns to All 45 local government units, including Becker County, 7 municipalities and 37 townships, Each of the 4 organized watershed districts within Becker County, The six adjacent counties (Clay, Norman, Mahnomens, Hubbard, Wadena and Otter Tail), The five state review agencies, including the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), the Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Department of Health (MDH), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations. A public survey was conducted, as well as a public meeting to solicit the public input on priority concern selection.

Priority Concerns: A *Priority Concerns Scoping Document* was prepared in order to identify and prioritize problems to be addressed in the County *Water Management Plan*. Preparation of the priority concerns scoping document is a requirement of the Comprehensive Water Management Act. The public survey and public meeting and numerous workgroups were used to identify the priority concerns for Becker County.

List of Priority Concerns Recommended:

- Drinking water and groundwater protection
- Altered hydrology
- Drainage Maintenance
- Stormwater management
- Wetland Protection
- Flood Damage Reduction
- Excess nutrients
- Soil erosion
- Soil health
- Aquatic invasive species
- Development Pressure
- Wildlife Habitat
- Agricultural Runoff
- Shoreline Protection
- Irrigation Water Management

Priority Concern and Implementation Goals: Surface Water Quality

Goal: Protection and Restoration of Surface Water Quality

Objective A. Improve stormwater runoff quality by increased utilization of stormwater management practices throughout the County. Implementation Costs \$649,000.

Objective B. Protect or Improve Surface Water Quality through Erosion and Sediment Control on Agricultural Land. Implementation Costs \$3,305,000.

Objective C. Reduction of Nutrients, Turbidity and/ or Bacteria in impaired watersheds. Implementation Costs \$1,305,000.

Objective D. Protect Becker County Lakes from Aquatic Invasive Species. Implementation Costs \$3,635,000.

Objective E. Manage Soil Health to reduce delivery of nutrients and sediment to surface waters. Implementation Costs \$345,000.

Objective F. Manage surface water hydrology sustainably to foster crop production, improve or protect water quality, achieve flood damage reduction and benefit wildlife habitat. Implementation Costs \$530,000.

Objective G. Provide Programs to Protect, Repair or Restore the Shorelines of Becker County. Implementation Costs \$3,160,000.

Objective H. Protect the wetlands of Becker County to achieve multiple benefits. Implementation Costs \$427,500.

Objective I. Develop and utilize the lands of Becker County without negative impact to aquatic resources. Implementation Costs \$1,382,500.

Objective J. Monitor Surface Water Quality to gage health, target resources, monitor effectiveness, and inform the public. Implementation Costs \$305,000

Priority Concerns and Implementation Goals: Ground Water Quality

Goal: Protection and Preservation of Ground Water Quality & Quantity

Objective A. Ensure proper septic system design, maintenance, inspection and compliance. Implementation Costs \$995,000.

Objective B. Protect wellhead and source water areas to maintain, enhance and improve the quality of public and private drinking water supplies. Implementation Costs \$519,500.

Objective C. Efficient use of groundwater resources for agricultural irrigation. Implementation Costs \$300,000.

Objective D. Proper nutrient management in crop and livestock production operations. Implementation Costs \$3,130,000.

Objective E. Ensure the safe and proper disposal of solid and hazardous waste. Implementation Costs \$20,000.

Objective F. Assess the health and vitality of domestic and public drinking and groundwater supplies. Implementation Costs \$95,500.

All figures listed do not reflect all existing programs that may also implement or complement local water management activities, nor landowner or future funding to address the resource concerns. These figures are based on current projections and where expansions are needed. We fully support the goals of other state, local and federal partners.

Public Comments: Trout population concerns were brought forward by Keith Mernitz, member of Trout Unlimited. He spoke of Rainbow Trout deficiencies in the area and especially Meadow Lake. Little Toad Lake Watershed and Little Toad River was a viable trout stream. Thermal testing and other lake monitoring is underway. The marshland between Perch Lake and Pickerel Lake has destroyed the water quality of Perch Lake causing a winter kill. Stocking took place in the 70s but the local fish population has since turned to crappies, pike, bass and sucker fish. Monitoring remains and if further testing continues to show improvement, they will stock various trout in hopes of making a comeback.

Straight River aquifers will reduce temperatures as well as the water levels which leaves fisheries vulnerable to recent changes. His hope is to hold water temperatures and create more habitats for the trout species. At the north end of Straight Lake and Upper Straight Creek, temperatures have been stable. They have not stocked brook trout for years. Most land is considered forestry but could be cleared for Ag use and should be protected. Upper Straight Creek contains Brook Trout while North Straight Lake holds Brown Trout.

Summary of Findings: The Board finds that sufficient opportunities have been provided for public and agency input, each component, goal and suggested action towards the priority concerns are addressed within the Becker County Local Water Management Plan as presented, and that with the acknowledgement, incorporation or reference to the comments received today the document fulfills the needs and requirements of a local water management plan.

Recommendations/Approval: Chairman Pavelko adjourned the public meeting and reconvened the special meeting at 10:12 a.m.

We will recognize the water quality/water temperature issue and its effect on the area's trout population in the Water Management Plan and will add information and data that Keith Mernitz offers. All responsible agencies have made their comments; adjustments have been entered and addressed.

Motion (Flottesch, Beck) to approve the *2017-2027 Water Management Plan* as submitted and with the above data and information included. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Adjournment: Chairman Pavelko adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.