

Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers Watershed District  
Judicial Ditch #14 – Watershed Planning  
Project Work Team Minutes  
Tuesday, May 31, 2017 at 9:30 am  
Viking Diner  
Viking, MN

A Project Team meeting of the JD14 Project Team was held on May 31, 2017 at the Viking Diner. Those present: Matt Fischer (BWSR), Denise Oakes (MPCA), George Bjorgaard (Landowner), Sharon Bring (Marshall County Commissioner), Willis Goll (NRCS), Dave Jones (NRCS), Doug Franke (MNDNR), Greg Dyrdal (Landowner), Tony Nordby (Houston Engineering), Christina Slowinski (MSTRWD), Brad Blawat (MSTRWD Manager), Ben Kleinwachter (MSTRWD Manager), Brent Silvis (MSTRWD).

Brent gave a brief introduction, including a summary of the May 5, 2017 informal landowner meetings. Introductions were made by those in attendance. The minutes from the previous Project Team meeting were briefly discussed, and one change was made. Those minutes can be viewed here: [http://mstrwd.org/wp-content/uploads/Minutes20170131\\_Final.pdf](http://mstrwd.org/wp-content/uploads/Minutes20170131_Final.pdf).

Tony gave a presentation. It can be viewed here: <http://mstrwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017-05-31-JD14-Project-Team-Meeting.pdf>. He reviewed the landowner input regarding drainage and flooding issues in the subwatershed and damages experienced. Tony gave a review of the existing conditions hydrology and hydraulics modeling performed by Houston Engineering, showing the expected flooding due to various rainfall events.

Tony explained that the NRCS had recently held a workshop in Fargo for all current RCPP watershed planning projects in the Red River Basin for both North Dakota and Minnesota and concerns were expressed that RCPP projects were not moving quickly enough. The NRCS would like project schedules updated and Purpose and Need Statements for projects should be provided to the NRCS. Dave expanded on this, explaining that the projects should stay on schedule and follow the planning process. This process will allow the project to develop. Once needs are identified, the purpose will be obvious.

The draft Purpose and Need Statement was discussed. Brent felt that the USACE would likely be looking for a short, concise and measurable purpose. Dave cautioned against mentioning “drainage” in the purpose. Matt suggested the removal of the word “primary” from the statement, and Dave agreed. Tony also suggested that the needs should be a bulleted list. Brent felt that the purpose should be to provide protection and the purpose should not focus strictly on the ditch system. From this discussion, Dave suggested a purpose of: “To provide flood damage reduction from a 10-year, 24-hour event to agricultural lands, public infrastructure and private land within the JD14 subwatershed.”

Ben asked why protection could not be provided for events larger than 10-year. Dave said the team could decide to do this, but it would likely not achieve a favorable benefit to cost ratio.

Brad asked if the capacity of the culvert at Lilac Ridge was the problem. Tony responded that the capacity was part of the problem.

Brent suggested taking the draft Purpose and Need Statement, with the changes identified at this meeting, to Craig Jarnot of the USACE for his preliminary approval, then bring it back to the project team for their approval. Ben suggested that project team approval be obtained via email, so it would not need to wait until the next project team meeting. Tony said this was possible. Tony also said Houston Engineering would provide any of the missing information within the Purpose and Need Draft, such as Table 1 and infrastructure damages, with assistance from Watershed District staff.

Tony said that, for the purpose of completing Review Point 2, the Environmental Assessment would be worked on at the next meeting.

Ben noted that some of the subwatershed had been enrolled in CRP because of poor drainage, and this should be viewed as ag damages. Dave said this was possible.

Sharon provided to the team the name of a landowner who she felt may be able to provide damages information.

Tony said that the next Project Team meeting would be in one to two months.

Adjourned.

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Brent Silvis  
Administrator  
MSTRWD