

Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework

Project Update

1/24/10

The Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework project, funded by the Clean Water Legacy Fund, is charged with developing a comprehensive statewide sustainable water resources detailed framework to protect, conserve, and enhance the quantity and quality of the state's groundwater and surface water. The Framework is managed by the Water Resources Center of the University of Minnesota and will inform the expenditure of Clean Water Legacy Funds.

The project is well into its first phase where Technical Work Teams undertake the task of framing issues. Each Technical Work Team will produce a white paper outlining what we know about the work team's issue, what we do not know, and what issues should be addressed in recommendations.

- Policy Technical Work Team - has met several times to create an understanding of current water policies and develop a list of issues.
- Education Technical Work Team - has met several times, surveyed current water education efforts, and defined goals for water education.
- Agricultural Team - has met once to brainstorm an initial list of possible issues and will meet again next week.
- Ecological Services Team - is recruiting members and will hold a workshop in April to develop the draft white paper.
- Domestic Use Team – co-chairs have met to develop a work plan and are recruiting members.
- Co-chairs have been identified for the Valuation, Manufacturing/Industrial Use, and Recreational/Spiritual/Cultural teams and will soon be recruiting members.

A draft white paper on water use has been compiled from federal and state data sources. This water use information will be used by all Technical Work Teams. A similar paper on water supply is being drafted. The Technical Work Teams will continue to work through late spring 2010 and white papers will be posted on the project website as they are finalized.

The Policy, Education, and Agricultural Teams will present white papers at the March 31 Headwaters Council meeting.

The Ecological Services, Domestic, Manufacturing/Industrial, Valuation, and Recreational/Spiritual/Cultural Teams will present white papers at the May 5 Headwaters Council meeting. In collaboration with the Headwaters Council meeting on May 5, a meeting of all Technical Work Team members will be held to share across teams.

The Framework Synthesis Team will be constituted in May and work throughout the summer months to review the work of the Technical Teams and deliver draft recommendations at the September 22 Headwaters Council meeting.

Final recommendations are to be delivered to the Minnesota Legislature in January 2011.

Project outreach efforts continue at a fast pace guided by an energetic Citizen/Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The "Minnesotans and Their Water" survey has been taken by nearly 2,500 people, one-fourth of our goal of 10,000 surveys. The project is partnering with BWSR to hold eight listening sessions around the state in late January and early February. Another series of public meetings will be held in the fall after draft recommendations are available.