



# MINUTES

## October 8, 2003

### **ATTENDEES**

Alison Fong, Mpls Environmental Mgmt.  
Anne Weber, St. Paul Public Works  
April Rust, MN DNR – Project WET  
Beth Storey, Friends of the Mississippi River  
Jenny Schaust, Hennepin Conservation District  
John Bilotta, Extension Service – Carver Co.  
Julie Westerlund, MN DNR

Linda Henning, Metropolitan Council ES  
Michele Hanson, MN DNR – Watershed Protection  
Pamela Jessup, Hamline – CGEE  
Rich Cairn, Cairn and Associates  
Ron Struss, MN Extension Service/BWSR  
Sarah Riddle, Eco Education  
Sharon Doucette, City of Woodbury  
Tracy Fredin, Hamline – CGEE

### **PARTNER UPDATES:**

#### **APRIL RUST**

Project WET and NEMO are partnering to present a workshop for resource professionals in Southern Minnesota on Oct. 30. Contact April Rust for more info. [april.rust@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:april.rust@dnr.state.mn.us) or 651-297-4951.

#### **TRACY FREDIN**

- The McKnight Foundation will be funding the WSP for the next two years at \$60,000.
- The Grand Excursion River Trunks have now all been distributed to all schools in the metropolitan area and schools from Minnesota to Iowa all along the Mississippi River. There were 850 trunks total with 300 of them going to Minnesotan schools. There are four different styles of trunks customized for grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. On May 13 there will be a big culminating event where schools will use the trunks to do a big presentation about projects they have been working on in correlation with the Grand Excursion.

#### **RICH CAIRN**

- Minneapolis Public Schools has developed a Scope and Sequence for Environmental Science.
- Minneapolis, Wayzata, Chaska, and Edina all received grants for service learning projects. Rich hopes to get these school districts connected with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

### **METRO WATERSHED PARTNERS UPDATE**

#### **VSMP (Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program) – MICHELE HANSON**

- River Summit on November 13 at the Science Museum. If you have questions or wish to attend please register with Mary Gullickson at 612-625-6781 or [gulli021@umn.edu](mailto:gulli021@umn.edu). The cost is \$15.00 with lunch and admission to the Science Museum included.
- VSMP's new taxonomic key (for specific use in Minnesota) is being formatted for printing and will be ready for final review in late October.
- Staff is currently working with the University of Minnesota to implement an innovative biological monitoring research project. Also staff is looking to find funding to implement Chironomidae pupal skin monitoring in Minnehaha Creek.
- Staff is developing a regional handbook to assist volunteers in understanding chemistry data with other regional coordinators from the Midwest.

## **NEMO – JULIE WESTERLUND**

NEMO is building a presentation for model stormwater and erosion control ordinances. It is a good starting point for communities to start talking about their approach to improved stormwater management.

## **METRO-MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN – RON STRUSS**

The first ad was placed in the Star Tribune on 10/8, and the Pioneer Press on 10/7. It is an obituary ad about “Patricia Lake”. The ad will be run twice in the Pioneer Press and three times in the Star Tribune this fall. There will be a break in advertising this winter, and it will start up again this spring.

<http://www.cleanwatermn.org/> website is now live. The home page talks about the fall campaign, and shows a PDF of the ad. This initial website will grow to become a stormwater education resource center for cities, citizens, citizen groups, students and educators.

Letters went out to 300 media people in MN about the metro media communications campaign.

An issue to be discussed is how do we continue all of this after the funding runs out? Ways of generating revenue are being explored as are ways of obtaining continued grant funding.

## **PRESENTATION 1: SCIENCE GRADUATION STANDARDS – RICH CAIRN**

(The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position of the Metro Watershed Partners or of its members; they are those of the presenter Rich Cairn.)

Minnesota science standards (the old Profile of Learning) were based on the national science standards and were excellent on most accounts. They included an area focused on environmental science. Several national reviewers gave these standards "A" ratings. The Profiles of Learning had their problems, but those problems could have been fixed through discussions with the Minnesota legislature. Minnesota has had one of the best science education systems in the world for some time.

Now with the proposed new Graduation Standards, environmental science is all but gone. Nothing in the new standards addresses the impacts that humans have on the environment. (For example, erosion is presented as a wholly natural process that people need to respond to, not prevent.) The science in this draft is faulty in many other ways. (Indeed, much of modern science is presented as provisional.) The format and the presentation of the new science standards leave out all PROCESS of science, it focuses mainly on learning facts. The process for developing the standards was structured to meet an ideological bias. Several participants on the review committees have complained that they had only three weeks to write the standards, that they were handed standards from other states and told to copy from there, and that they were not really allowed to work together.

The Minnesota Association for Environmental Education and the Minnesota Science Teachers Association are expected to release statements from their boards. The Minnesota Senate will produce an alternate set of standards by the spring legislative session. (The standards must ultimately be approved by the Legislature.)

Input meetings going on at high schools across the state where the public can share their thinking about the standards. My recommendation is to scrap the current draft and begin again with the National Science Standards. But failing that, we still need to give SPECIFIC comments on the current standards. (As many as you can. The Commissioner counts comments one by one.)

What can you do?

1. Read the standards. They can be found at <http://www.education.state.mn.us>
2. Comment on the standards. (<http://www.education.state.mn.us>) There are also a couple of public comment meetings left. (See web site.)
3. Write letters to the editor and to your legislators. Tell of your concerns. Speak up for the National Science Standards and for good science.
4. Tell your friends, relatives, and colleagues to make their views known.

At this point, it's largely about numbers. Especially recruit any scientists or employers who need to hire people with solid science background.

**PRESENTATION 2: NEMOS “LINKING LAND USE TO LAKE QUALITY” PRESENTATION – JULIE WESTERLUND**

This presentation addresses the economics of protecting lakes, the impacts of development on lakes, and ideas about what each city can do. Key terms reviewed are: watershed, fish habitat, water cycle, impervious surfaces, runoff, nonpoint source pollution, and phosphorous. It covers tools that can be used in lake protection, including the planning, zoning, site design, and low impact development. This presentation is usually given to lake associations that invite local governmental decision makers to participate. The target audience for NEMO presentations are local government officials – those who make decisions on land use.

**NOTES:**

- **Next Steering Committee meeting: Monday, October 27, 2 p.m.**, at the Center for Global Environmental Education (CGEE), Hamline University. The Steering Committee meets regularly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month, 2-4 p.m., at CGEE. Meetings are open to all WaterShed Partners.
- **Next WaterShed Partners meeting: Wednesday, November 12, 9 a.m.**, at the Dept. of Agriculture, St. Paul. Let a Steering Committee member know if you have an agenda item for the meeting. The WaterShed Partners meet regularly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 9-11 a.m.

**2003 STEERING COMMITTEE:**

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cliff Aichinger, 651-704-2089 | Michele Hanson, 651-766-4192 |
| Jay Michels, 651-351-0630     | Ron Struss, 651-215-1950     |
| Jerry Spetzman, 651-297-7269  | Tracy Fredin, 651-523-3105   |
| Margie Vigoren 763-509-5506   |                              |

**FFI:** Contact a Steering Committee member or Pamela Jessup, 651-523-2591 / [pajessup@hamline.edu](mailto:pajessup@hamline.edu)