East and West Nishnabotna WMA Meeting – September 14 – Oakland

Attendees: total of 46 (IWA associated – 7)

9:10 am – Meeting called to order
Michelle Franks – Golden Hills RC&D

9:15 am – IFC/IIHR Iowa Watershed Approach (IWA) Update – Larry Weber
- IWA components:
  - Establish Watershed Management Authority (WMA)
  - Hydrologic assessment and watershed plan
  - Monitoring of flood and water quality
  - Implement projects/practices to reduce flooding and improve water quality
  - Assess the projects benefits based on monitoring and modeling data
- Between East and West Nishnabotna watersheds, we impact 77 subwatersheds
- Voluntary enrollment process for built projects on land of private landowners
  - Cost-share process (75% covered, 25% for landowner)
  - Potential for funding sources to cover landowner 25% share
- IWA Website
  - Made available to public soon
  - IWA Information System is a combination of IFIS and IWQIS and will be accessed via IWA website – specific to the watersheds in IWA
    - Iowa Flood Information System (IFIS)
    - Iowa Water Quality Information System (IWQIS)
- Master funding agreement between HUD and IEDA is still in process
  - Awaiting online fund reporting system to be up and running
- All funding targeted and limited to Mills and Fremont counties
  - Due to Housing of Urban Development requirements
  - $2.3 million for E. Nish and $5.4 million for W. Nish

9:52 am – IDNR – Kyle Ament
- Watershed Management Authority/Coalition/Association/any name of preference
- WMA activities
  - Assessment of flood risk and water quality
  - Education to communities regarding flood and water quality
  - Grant writing and administration
  - CANNOT acquire property by eminent domain
- Project coordinator – WMA development and interact with landowners for built projects
  - Shared by E & W Nishnabotna
- WMA formation - notify ALL eligible entities (cities, counties, SWCDs)
  - 17 cities and 19 counties and SWCDs in E & W Nishnabotna
  - Other entities can be involved, too, but these MUST be invited
  - A single entity can be involved in multiple WMAs
• Organizational packet (provided to you at meeting)
  o Examples of chapter 28E agreement (Cedar River and Walnut Creek)
  o Copy of WMA by-laws
  o IDNR Pro-Bono Services (free services) – watershed formation, planning, etc.
  o IDNR website has all 28E agreements and WMAs in Iowa
• Successful WMA includes subcommittees lead by local individuals and communities
• Finalize 28E agreements by November/Winter 2016-17
• Official invitation letter to WMA entities by December/Winter 2016-17
• Attend board meetings and obtain signatures through January-December 2017
• File 28E agreement by September/Fall 2017

**NEXT STEPS**
• Start WMA formation over next couple of months
  o Engage local individuals and communities to lead 28E agreement from both E and W Nishnabotnas
  o Advantage of E & W Nishnabotna watersheds is Golden Hills and Hunger Cannons available for support and lead
• After WMA formation, watershed planning will occur
• Tell other communities and individuals that were not here today that should be involved

11:10 am – Meeting adjourns

*Next Iowa Watershed Approach WMA Meeting (tentative):
Wednesday, December 14 at 9 am @ Oakland Community Center*
Q&A

1. How did the east area of Iowa get their WMAs started?
   a. 16 in state of Iowa – 6 started with previous Iowa Watershed Project
   b. Often began by county supervisor, RC&D, council of gov., or city administrator
   c. “Authority” raises concern – can change this to say association, coalition, etc.

2. Do we have anyone that follows climate change research?
   a. ISU does climate-related research
   b. Center for global and environmental research

3. Are we seeing more rainfall events?
   a. Yes – Nov and Dec 2015 we saw large rainfall events – no trend can be determined for one year, but it is a concern

4. How are wetlands created for IWA?
   a. Crop wetlands – integrated in agriculture landscape and still farming up above wetland
   b. Standard NRCS design

5. 28E agreement gets filed, and new city wants to join, do you have to refile for every join?
   a. Yes – any change to agreement must go through amendment process
   b. Not a hefty process – 2/3 vote from the board
   c. Agreement can be amended at any time

6. One of the existing WMAs was not successful, what did they do wrong?
   a. One of the first WMAs formed (6 pilots), and had hurdles and pilot process
   b. Potential problem: not locally lead WMA – local commitment is essential
   c. There are 16 other WMAs successful in the state of Iowa

7. For 28E agreement, who all can participate?
   a. Entire E & W Nishnabotna may be involved (again, cities, counties, and SWCDs must all be INVITED, but do NOT have to accept/participate)
   b. Other entities can be invited and represented as well – (e.g. Hamburg)

8. How was the green-hatched areas on map identified and who did it?
   a. Identified by HUD requirements included presidential declared disaster, MID-URN unmet needs, impaired waters, turbidity, soil loss information, biological data, and nutrient run-off (N & P)
   b. Practices/built projects will be constructed in green-hatched areas

9. How are WMAs across Iowa or country receiving funding?
   a. Iowa does not have authority to tax, but Minnesota has ability to service a tax
   b. Short-term investments including grant writing coordinator
10. When I think of a watershed, I do not think of straight lines, but the green-hatched area has straight lines and that bothers me. Why are there straight lines?
   a. We recognize that watersheds are naturally curved and following water
   b. These are being used as examples for future work in other areas hopefully

11. What are the practices/built project and who administers them?
   a. Voluntary enrollment by landowners
   b. Flood first – so holding water back on land is the focus
   c. List will be on IWA website – farm ponds, wetlands, saturated buffers, bioreactors...
   d. Maintenance agreements will be made – about 20-year agreement
   e. NRCS design and NCFS will enforce agreement
   f. County of fiscal eligibility will manage and enforce agreement

12. Counties outside E & W Nishnabotna, should I get them involved in WMA?
   a. Yes – more support and more funding opportunities
   b. Other WMAs obtain funding successfully through early planning, engagement, etc.

13. Can you have a WMA that encompasses multiple HUC 12s?
   a. Yes – if those HUC 12s (smaller-scale watersheds) are in the same HUC 8 (larger-scale watershed), then you can have one WMA that includes all eligible HUC 12s

14. When do you want 28E agreement finalized and available for obtaining signatures?
   b. Need local commitment – e.g. Golden Hills RC &D, council of gov., or local individuals
   c. Fairly short and easy to read (less than 10 pages)

15. Who determines match?
   a. IWA limited to HUD rules of 75% and 25% cost-share
   b. Counties can provide funding to offset some of 25%

16. If we do not take care of the upper watershed and upland commitment, how do we know this will survive?
   a. All part of watershed planning - HUC 12s that drain into HUC 8 (E & W Nishnabotna) are important to management and commitment of a successful WMA plan
   b. From HUDs perspective, all watersheds drain into another watershed (e.g. Mississippi River to Gulf of Mexico)

17. Is there a plan for implementing monitoring stations? Scientifically-based?
   a. Analyze hydro assessment and existing data (stream gauge and rainfall data)
   b. Identify gap areas - where could we use additional info? Soil moisture data is a gap area across the state of Iowa
   c. Working partnership and agreement between local communities/landowners and IFC to identify areas for implementing monitors (locally-led meaning IFC will NOT enforce landowners to put structure on their land unless they agree to it)
# Iowa Watershed Approach

## East & West Nishnabotna WMA Planning Meeting Sign-in Sheet

Wednesday, September 14, 2016, 9 am at Oakland Community Building, Oakland, IA

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