

## **Wright County NWQ Water Quality/Natural Resources Committee Meeting #3 Monday, May 5, 2008**

**Committee Members Present:** Dave Wagner, James Olsen, Rose Thelen, Shelly Jonas, Lance Lindstrom, Mike Mcnellis, Mark Kampa

**Staff Present:** Tom Salkowski, Stacy Marquardt, Scott Deckert

**Others:** Joe Jacobs (SWCD), Merle Anderson (CRWD)

### **I. Guest Speaker – Joe Jacobs, “Wright County Water Management”**

Jacobs discussed the district’s water management plan, lake monitoring data, total maximum daily load and land use impacts. The main concerns are ground water quality, surface water quality, development pressure and agricultural land uses.

Wright County has an abundance of water resources. Jacobs reviewed the 2008 testing program of 48 lakes in the County, and reviewed which lakes are impaired, new to the list, and which lakes were tested last year. 23 lakes are currently not supporting standards. Jacobs explained the TMDL process and used Anne Lake, Locke Lake and the Silver Creek TMDL as examples.

Key contributors to water quality are agriculture, urban/suburban development, and rural residential development, including lakeshore. Runoff, infiltration, evapo-transpiration and river erosion are all affected by development. Non-conforming septic systems and other non-point source pollution loads our runoff.

**Discussion:** There was discussion regarding aggregate mining within the groundwater, and mining within shoreland. There are many threats to groundwater and the focus should be kept on those that are most important.

The process of a TMDL was further discussed, in particular, how a lake is evaluated and how a solution is found. Funding is an important part of the process, and administration and implementation is a challenge. The group discussed watershed districts in the County and the best way to go about implementing some of these programs.

Wagner stressed how important it is to set some sort of a visionary commitment for future compliance. For example, could we commit to having no impaired waters in 20 years? That will give everyone fair warning to get in compliance. Salkowski agreed that, to some extent, that’s what a land use plan does. Implementation is the tough part, and the time frame is crucial. The goal has to be realistic and it may not get done, but the goal still needs to be set and you still need to try.

There was discussion about the point-of-sale system and what it means when septic systems are “failing”. It’s often challenging to convince the landowners that their system needs to be replaced when it’s been “working” fine for many years. Additional landowner and realtor education could be considered to make these issues more clear. To some extent, the POS ordinance was a visionary commitment.

### **II. NEQ Review**

Marquardt reviewed the new corridor map, the NEQ “Resource Land” definition and policies. At the next meeting, the committee will look at maps and start to identify areas worth protecting. The next priority will be to discuss new rules or other implementation strategies. Not only should we work on the plan, but on implementing the ideas of the plan from here on.

The group discussed adding lands and who should be suggesting ideas for additional resource land. The information gathered in the first 3 meetings should help to influence decisions on new policies and new resource lands. Involving and talking with landowners of these areas is also important, though there is obviously mixed opinions. There are few incentives for preserving land and the programs are voluntary.

The next meeting is June 2.