



**Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Agenda**  
**11/21/2024 12:30-1:30 p.m.**  
**Lake County Division of Transportation**  
**600 W. Winchester Rd, Libertyville IL 60048**

**Discussion and Possible Approval of the Following:**

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Waters, Monitoring Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:30.

**2. Roll Call**

Anna Niedzinski, DRWW Coordinator performed roll call. Members present: Chair **Steve Waters**, North Shore Water Reclamation District (NSWRD); **Alana Bartolai**, Lake County Public Health; **Nick Huber**, Lake County Forest Preserve District; **Brian Kuebker**, Village of Libertyville; **Linda Tilton**, Sierra Club (Arrived during item 6.a.); and **Don Wilson**, EPS, Inc. A quorum was present.

Others present: Anna Niedzinski, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC); Stephen McCracken, DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup (DRSCW); Larry Cox, DRSCW; Chuck Bodden, NSWRD; Rob Flood, NSWRD; Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec; Paul Kendzior, Village of Libertyville; Michael Talbett, Village of Kildeer; and Tom Morthorst, Village of Third Lake. Attending virtually, JoAnn Burkholder, Ph.D., North Carolina State University; Albert Ettinger, Illinois Chapter Council; and Ashley Strelcheck, Lake County SMC.

**6. a. Comment on the Draft NARP (Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan) for the Upper Des Plaines River by JoAnn Burkholder, Ph.D., North Carolina State University**

Bartolai made a motion to move item 6.a. Comment on the Draft NARP (Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan) for the Upper Des Plaines River by JoAnn Burkholder, Ph.D., North Carolina State University to be the next agenda item. Kuebker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a consensus vote.

Dr. JoAnn Burkholder, North Carolina State University, presented the "Summary of Comments - Draft NARP for the Upper Des Plaines River" to the Monitoring Committee. Dr. Burkholder was asked to look over the Draft NARP report to comment on the methodology and model used. After reviewing the document Dr. Burkholder deemed that draft NARP for the Upper Des Plaines River fails to meet the goal for a NARP as set by the IEPA, because the approach was a modeling exercise based mostly on inadequate data from the Des Plaines River (DPR), with simulations that poorly describe river conditions. And that the draft NARP does not identify P reductions that will bring the DPR into compliance with water quality standards.

The first reason Burkholder deemed that the draft NARP for the Upper Des Plaines River fails to meet the purpose of a NARP because the approach was a modeling exercise based on extremely sparse actual measurements for key parameters. Dr. Burkholder cited several sections of the NARP where “data augmentation” methods for nutrients and algal abundance were used which were fed into the model. As a result, the model’s assumptions have a poor fit to the actual data collected. The second reason that Dr. Burkholder cited is that the draft NARP shows only a few scenarios that would not substantially improve phosphorus impaired waters. The scenarios selected only show a set reduction from different sources, in Dr. Burkholder’s comment, and the scenario that should have been modeled is what controls need to be implemented to reach water quality attainment. Dr. Burkholder emphasized that reduction of phosphorus from wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) is warranted since WWTPs add 70% of the phosphorus to the Upper Des Plaines River, but addressing nonpoint sources is also important. Algae in Illinois streams become phosphorus saturated a 0.2 mg/L and a 0.5 mg TP/L effluent limit of will not be low enough to improve algal chlorophyll *a* or DO. Dr. Burkholder believes that the NARP should focus on decreasing river TP below 0.2 mg/L through reductions in all sources to the maximum extent feasible.

### **3. Public Comment**

Ettinger, Illinois Chapter Council, and the environmental groups Ettinger represents, are eager to work with the DRWW to address nutrients in the Des Plaines River.

### **4. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

#### **a. \*10/17/24 Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Kuebker, seconded by Bartolai to approve the 10/17/24 Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes. Motion passed with a consensus vote.

### **5. Old Business**

#### **a. LCHD 2024 Monitoring Update**

Bartolai provided an update to the Monitoring Committee on the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) monitoring program. LCHD has completed sampling for 2024. The data and invoice for the September 2024 sampling has been submitted.

#### **b. USGS to consider establishing a Next Generation Water Observing Station on Des Plaines River at IL-WI border Update**

Bodden, NSWRD, provided an overview of a call between DRWW and the USGS concerning the feasibility of installing a Next-Generation Water Observing System (NGWOS) at the Illinois-Wisconsin border near Russel Road. The USGS currently has a gauge there where the agency can power the NGWOS. The USGS recommended that the DRWW sign on for a three-year monitoring term. The cost proposal will be dependent on what parameters the DRWW is interested in measuring and the cost to maintain the NGWOS. The Monitoring Committee will discuss this further at a future meeting.

### **6. New Business**

\* = DRWW Action Item

**a. Comment on the Draft NARP (Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan) for the Upper Des Plaines River by JoAnn Burkholder, Ph.D., North Carolina State University**

To be respectful of Dr. Burkholder's time item was moved up the agenda, before public comment. Bartolai made a motion to move item 6.a. Comment on the Draft NARP (Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan) for the Upper Des Plaines River by JoAnn Burkholder, Ph.D., North Carolina State University to be the next agenda item. Kuebker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a consensus vote.

**b. \*FY2025 LCHD Water Quality Monitoring Contract Recommendation to Executive Board**

Bartolai presented on the 2025 LCHD DRWW Monitoring Contract for the cost of \$89, 084.50. The 2025 contract is like last year's contract, with a slight increase over the 2024 cost. The monitoring schedule and parameters are to satisfy the permit requirements during this interim period, until the monitoring committee develops an updated monitoring strategy.

Motion by Kuebker, second by Huber to recommend to Executive Board the approval of the FY2025 LCHD DRWW Monitoring Water Quality Monitoring Contract. The motion passed with a consensus vote, with Bartolai abstaining.

**c. 2024 Annual Newsletter Discussion**

Niedzinski is assembling the FY2024 Annual Accomplishments Newsletter and provided a summary of articles that will be included in the newsletter. A draft copy of the newsletter will be available for comment in December.

**7. Member Comments**

Niedzinski remarked that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has two draft reports on the Fox-Illinois river TMDL open for public comment and will be accepting written comments through Dec. 6, 2024.

Niedzinski announced that the Illinois Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be developing a Watershed Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan/EA) for the Upper Des Plaines River Watershed in 2025. The NRCS will be having a meeting on December 10th at 1:30pm at the Central Permit Facility.

Niedzinski announced Joel Sensenig left Lake County on November 15<sup>th</sup>, Austin MacFarlane as his alternate will continue to perform Joel's DRWW duties.

Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec, remarked that the DRSCW has responded to the IEPA and the Fox River Study Group is drafting a letter to respond to the IEPA.

**8. Next Meeting(s)**

- a. Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting January 16, 2025 at 12:30pm (LCDOT Conference Room A)

**9. Adjournment**

Motion by Bartolai, seconded by Wilson to adjourn. Motion passed with unanimous vote. Waters adjourned the meeting at 1:48pm.