

**Southern Minnesota Nutrient Efficiency Coalition**  
**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**February 19, 2009**

**Notes**

In Attendance: David Ward, Adam Arndt, Kevin Kuehner, Warren Formo, Rich Biske, Matt Drewitz, Roger Wilkowske, Jerome Lensing, Donna Rasmussen, Dawn Bernau, Wayne Anderson, Bruce Henningsgaard, Larry Gunderson, Brad Carlson, Ed Hohenstein, Christa Jones

**Participation.** Christa Jones reported on people who have agreed to join the group. They include Brad Carlson, Extension; Warren Formo, Ag Water Resources; David Ward, Farmer; Jerome Lensing, CCA; and Rich Biske, The Nature Conservancy. Bill Bond was asked to participate (representing fertilizer dealers) but he declined. Christa will contact Darren Pittman for assistance in finding someone to represent the fertilizer industry.

**Vision.** Draft: We envision a public/private partnership that forms a unified voice for promoting nutrient management in Southern Minnesota.

Discussion on vision. Strengthen the idea of industry leadership within the vision.

Jerome: Is there a particular geography that the group is targeting within S. Minnesota?

Minnesota River Basin and southeast Minnesota.

Warren: Should we make the boundaries match with University work?

Brad: Different fertilizer recommendations in different parts of state/different BMPs.

Jerome: nutrient management in west MN vs. south central vs. southeast are three different animals

Wayne: We left it broad to address the primary contributors to the Gulf. Southeast and South Central were chosen—this is the time to reign in the area if needed

Dawn: We could use the BMP guidelines to break up the areas (there are different recommendations for each area)

Roger: We could keep it southern MN and talk about SW, S Central, and SE as needed, depending on the activity or subject. Use smaller areas as is practical.

David: We talk about a unified voice for “promoting” -- does “promoting” mean “policy forming” or “communicating”?

Education.

Warren: Who are we educating? Producers to use nutrients more efficiently—or non-producers to realize that producers use nutrients efficiently?

Wayne: Both. It is about the importance of nutrient efficiency. We have a common interest in not wasting nutrients. Where do we have common interests?

Warren: the way we word these things is important. Not sure we have a baseline.

Christa: Can everyone live with the vision draft?

Brad: We don't need to be creating another area of work where they already exist. This vision is fine.

**Mission.** Draft mission: Draw on our diversity and focus to attract and undertake short and long term actions for continual benefit to the watershed.

Wayne: our scope includes urban nutrient management as well as on-farm.

Dawn: Add something into mission—we are inviting farmers to be a part of this

Roger: “Draw on our diversity” can signify that farmers are represented

Suggested change to Mission: Draw on our diversity and the knowledge-base of the farming community...

David: Was there the idea that this group would develop policy?

Wayne: We are not a policy collaborative. We should not prominently feature “attract funding.”

Bruce: Don’t need “attract funding” in mission.

Warren: We are not a policy group.

Dave: Funding can mean incentives. This group might solicit funding for practices?

Warren: More about dialogue than funding. More about issues such as the discrepancy between University and industry fertilizer recommendations. Do not see funding as issue.

Dawn: Please look over the resource sheet and let her know of additions.

Donna: Use “nutrient efficiency” rather than “nutrient management.”

New Draft Mission: Draw on our diversity and the knowledge of the farming community to promote nutrient efficiency which is both environmentally responsible and economically viable.

### **Key Result Areas.**

1. *Increase in research.* (Group agreed that we would not do research, but that we might recommend and advocate for research. Research needs include : what are the impacts of nutrients on the environment? Why should people care? Need research station in southeast MN—looking for on-farm research)
2. *Increase in baseline information.* (So that we may base our work on realities rather than perceptions. )
3. *Increase in communication.* (We need to get up to speed on the issues—need access to the latest information. It was suggested that a website be constructed to be a common place for farmers and other interested people to look for information on nutrient efficiency. A place for farmers to ask questions. There needs to be better access to credible information: nutrient amounts applied, research results, industry news.)
4. *Water quality improvement to impaired waters.*

David: Farmers have been improving in nutrient efficiency. Now producing a bushel of corn with .8 lb nitrogen.

Dawn: Information like that needs to be shared. The web site could serve as a depository for credible information.

**Date for coalition meeting.** August 19, 2009.

**How to package and distribute resource information.** Post on website (Christa)

Christa will distribute new participant list.

Next conference call: April 7 at 1:00 PM Central.