

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MINNESOTA WATER POLICY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

11:00 AM

Co-Chairs:

Sen. Chris Eaton (presiding): Rep. John Poston

Jim Stark, Director

Subcommittee Support: Carol Bisbee

AGENDA

- **Call to order/approval of subcommittee minutes- August 25**
- **Presentation: MGWA Review of 1989 Groundwater Protection Act: Jim Lundy, MPCA/MDH, retired**
- **Presentation: Policy and Management of Minnesota's Lakes, DNR staff**
- **Presentation: St Anthony Falls: John Anfinson, National Park System, retired**
- **Testifiers, if any**
- **Legislative update, progress and plans, Jim Stark**
- **Adjourn**

PRESENTATION-1

REVIEW OF THE 1989 GROUNDWATER ACT-

JIM LUNDY (MGWA)

PRESENTATION-2

POLICY AND MANAGEMENT OF MINNESOTA'S SHALLOW LAKES

DNR STAFF

PRESENTATION-3

ST ANTHONY FALLS UPDATE

JOHN ANFINSON

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- **Stakeholder meeting- September 7—Groundwater Issues**
- **Described issues from members, citizens and stakeholders**
- **Received significant feedback**
- **Survey followed to prioritize**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE-2

- **FOLLOWED UP WITH A SURVEY TO PRIORITIZE THE ISSUES**
- **SECOND MEETING IN OCTOBER**
- **ISSUES OTHER THAN GROUNDWATER**

GROUP 1

1) UPDATE OF THE 1989 GROUNDWATER (GW) ACT

- The Act is old and in need of updating- MGWA has evaluated the act in a white paper
- MGWS suggests changes to address stable GW funding, more emphasis on groundwater sustainability, and minor changes in water governance

2) OPTIONS FOR WATER SCARCITY IN THE NE METRO

- Funding proposed to address water needs for WBL and for cities
- Evaluate and plan for a pipeline to supplement WBL when needed
- Provide land and plans for municipal water if needed

3) DEFINE SUSTAINABLE GW LIMITS USING TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES (MGS AND DNR)

- Science advances allow for efficiently defining budgets, across counties, for aquifers and watersheds
- Pilot effort would combine geologic data and modeling to define sustainable limits
- Provides an example for 1w/1p application across the state

GROUP 2

4) VOLUNTARY PRIVATE WELL TESTING

- Private wells supply over a million Minnesotans
- No state requirements for water safety testing
- Bill would provide minimal funding to assist non-profit organizations
- Volunteers, would conduct local clinics, in cooperation with the MDH and UM

5) ENSURING THE SAFETY OF PRIVATE WELLS BY IDENTIFYING AND MONITORING VULNERABLE AQUIFERS

- Bill Would identify and monitor aquifers that are vulnerable
- Several State Agencies have programs for GW Monitoring
- Financial support is needed, to agencies to coordinate sampling the testing
- In some areas an expanded network may be needed

6) ASSESSING EMERGING AND UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS IN DRINKING WATER:

- Ever-increasing number of drinking-water contaminants that threaten drinking water
- Emerging contaminants are not fully addressed at the federal level
- Funding (MDH and MPCA) to prioritize the contaminants/develop management plans

GROUP 3

7) EMERGING CONTAMINANT SENTINEL MONITORING PROGRAM:

- Don't know the extent and threat of forever chemicals in drinking water
- Need to address drinking -water safety, by expanding an LCCMR-MDH project into a program
- Develop a network of monitoring sites from community and non-community wells
- Results would identify sensitive aquifers, relative to emerging contaminants
- Program would address water safety for private and municipal wells

8) WATER SAFETY PLANS FOR CITIES– A PILOT:

- Bill involves water-safety planning for cities
- Described in detail in a recent MDH/UM report
- Provide flexible approach to local drinking-water-safety planning
- Simply directs a prototype plan for one city

9) ENHANCED ARTIFICIAL RECHARGE (AR)

- In some areas AR is needed to supplement natural recharge
- AR is common in many parts of the country
- AR is generally discouraged in MN
- Freshwater and the UM have examined the feasibility AR
- Policy and funds are needed to allow and encourage AR in some areas

GROUP 4

10) GROUNDWATER QUALITY: PESTICIDES AND NUTRIENTS IN GW

- GW quality protection was a significant driver for the 1989 GW Act
- As a result, MDA proposed increased funding for pesticide and nutrient rule development
- The legislature funded only one chemical program: MDA developed a pesticide program
- this meant that nutrient management lagged until legacy funds became available.
- The Act gave MDA the opportunity to develop additional rules
- An MDA review of policy plans is proposed, for a complete management approach for pesticides and nutrients

11) CHLORIDE REDUCTION

- We overuse deicing salt, and it degrades the waters of the state.
- It is feasible to reduce the use of salt
- Legislation would provide support for continued applicator training, research and policy

12) ADDRESS DISCONNECT BETWEEN LAND USE AND GW QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- The connection between land use and GW quality has long been recognized
- However, the connections are not fully understood
- Policy and a management plan is needed

GROUP 5

13) PLAN FOR CHANGES TO WATER FROM CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Climate models suggest more heavy rainfall and longer dry spells
- Climate change will also affect groundwater quality and quantity
- These will affect water resources, we need to plan
- A plan (DNR, PCA, MDH) is needed to for these changes

14) WATER APPROPRIATIONS: INTER-BASIN TRANSPORT AND PROTECTIONS

- Inter-basin water transfers have become an important issue.
- Recently, a company applied to ship water to the southwest
- This proposal was not approved; however, this may not be the case for other aquifers.
- Examination of statutes is needed to provide policy future (DNR)

15) ADJUSTING WATER APPROPRIATION COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES:

- Many commercial and industrial facilities are involved in water conservation and quality improvement
- Those entities could be allowed to use water, efficiently during drought
- The golf industry has been working with the UM to pursue conservation to reduce the need for irrigation
- Legislation could recognize these efforts
- The appropriation hierarchy could be amended to allow “*water conservation* entities ” the use of needed, limited water during drought

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE-3

**PLANNING A SECOND STAKEHOLDER
MEETING IN OCTOBER**

OTHER ISSUES, POLICY

ISSUES OTHER THAN GROUNDWATER-1

- **Improved water and agriculture**
- **Keeping our lakes clean initiative**
- **Carbon capture in mine-waste rocks**
- **Tax credit for private riparian buffer lands**
- **Soil-health action plan**
- **Water Commission and the Wastewater Advisory Council**
- **Complete land preservation goals for water-Upper Mississippi**
- **Keeping water on the land**
- **Water retention— rural**
- **Water retention—urban storm water**
- **Appropriation to support fixed costs for watershed districts**

ISSUES OTHER THAN GROUNDWATER-2

- **Addressing water utilities staffing shortages**
- **Upgrading drinking water infrastructure**
- **Citizen involvement in drinking water safety**
- **Water education**
- **Prioritizing for environment outcomes**
- **Increased technical proficiency**
- **Increase efforts for wastewater and storm-water treatment**
- **Policy on manure management**
- **Labeling for wipes to improve wastewater treatment operations**

ISSUES OTHER THAN GROUNDWATER-3

- ✓ State assumption of federal wetlands permit responsibilities (404)
- ✓ Water quality trading
- ✓ Streamline irrigation water appropriation process
- ✓ Forever chemicals in food waste compost
- ✓ Encourage efficient wastewater/storm-water technology, treatment
- ✓ Long-range water planning
- ✓ Future of drinking water- planning for the future:
- ✓ Culvert replacement program:
- ✓ Policy on regionalization of water municipal water supply systems
- ✓ Stop the carp
- ✓ Shallow lakes management
- ✓ Statewide mining policy

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE-3

- **Long list!**
- **Survey will be used to prioritize**
- **Some topics are included in Clean Water budget recommendations**
- **I'll be back in November with a short list**
- **Post elections--will work closely with individual members as well as the subcommittee**



THANKS

Adjourn

