

Legislative Water Commission Update 03/23/2018

ERRORS? OMISSIONS? If found, please notify jim.stark@lcc.leg.mn.

This updates is a roundup of Minnesota water news as well as articles from beyond Minnesota that may inform members. It also includes summaries of meetings I have monitored and reports I have read, as well as information about upcoming events. During the Legislative Session, updates on water-related legislation and committee activities are added. Any errors or omissions are inadvertent.

I look forward to continuing to work on water issues that are important to all of us.

Jim Stark, Director, MN Legislative Water Commission

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Rm 65 State Office Building

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651/284-6431

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Next meeting of the Legislative Water Commission: March 26 at 6:00 pm.

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MINNESOTA NEWS

The group sponsoring a **Red River diversion channel** around the Fargo area has completed a revised plan in hopes of reviving the stalled project. The new plan came after the North Dakota and Minnesota governors assembled a [task force](#) to study the project that was halted by a federal judge because it didn't have a permit from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Authority officials say the new design was handled by a technical team that included three DNR members. A new permit application will be submitted to the DNR later this month. (MPR)

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is changing how it stocks **rainbow trout in Lake Superior** after studies revealed that two different types of trout were interbreeding. Visit <https://www.mprnews.org/>

The MPCA is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the **Citizen Stream Monitoring Program** this year, and produced a video to recognize volunteers and their contributions to cleaner water (MPR).

Mankato Free Press: The Minnesota Rural Water Association recognized area officials for their work to better water and wastewater systems at its annual conference. **Mankato** was awarded the Source Water Protection Award for the city's efforts to seal abandoned wells, which was launched with the 2014 Wellhead Protection plan ([read more](#)).

WCCO: Why do some Minnesota Lakes Smell Like Sulfur in the Spring? Ever notice a funky smell around the lakes this time of year? ([read more](#)).

Well Levels Dropping: Even with 32 inches of precipitation a year in southern Minnesota, our water supply is dropping. Department of Natural Resources wants the public to know that it is important to use water wisely. ([read more](#)).

Ice Jams on Local Rivers: With temps warming up across the region, many rivers in the area are starting to jam up with ice. One particular bad spot is where the Blue Earth River feeds into the Minnesota River. Because the Blue Earth River is small, it loses its ice first. When the ice flows downstream and into the Minnesota, it has nowhere to go because the Minnesota River has not melted yet, causing an ice dam. ([Read more](#)).

WATER ACTIONS

Metropolitan Council: The Metropolitan Council held a public hearing on wastewater-related alternative policy Amendments to their Water Resources Policy Plan on March 13. The hearings relate to the re-use of treated water from a wastewater treatment plant in Empire. The treated wastewater would be used for a proposed industrial facility in the southeast Metro. Contact: Tim O'Donnell at (651) 602-1477. The alternative policy amendments are available at the Metropolitan Council Website: <https://metro council.org>

Minnesota Association of soil and Water Conservation Districts held its 2018 Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol on March 12-23. At the briefing the Association presented its 2018 Legislative Priorities. <http://www.maswcd.org/>

SURFACE WATER/STORMWATER

USGS Publication on Sediment Sampling: Comparability of river suspended-sediment sampling and laboratory analysis methods: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2018–5023, 23 p., <https://doi.org/10.3133/sir20185023>. The paper compares differences between grab sampling to equal-width-increment equal-discharge-increment sampling and suspended sediment concentration laboratory analysis methods. Contact: Joel Groten (jgroten@usgs.gov)

WASTEWATER

MPCA. The MPCA's Water Fee Advisory Committee met, on March 16, to discuss possible increased to permit fees for municipal and industrial wastewater, Industrial wastewater, storm water, subsurface sewage-treatment systems, and feedlot permit feeds

AGRICULTURE AND WATER

Board of Water and Soil Resources: The BWSR Buffers, Soils and Drainage Committee has recommended the acceptance of the report to the Legislature ("Recommendations for *Accelerating* Public Drainage System Acquisition and Establishment of Buffer Strips and Alternative Practices". The BWSR Board accepted the report for transmittal to Senate and House committees with jurisdiction over agriculture and environmental policy. Contact Al Kean, BSWR, (651) 297-2907. al.kean@state.mn.us

Northern Border Lakes

The 2018 Rainy River- Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum was held in International Falls, on March 7-8. The meeting focused on invasive species, algal blooms, nutrient loading, and fisheries in the northern border lakes and rivers of Minnesota and Canada. One of the significant presentations was a paper by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. The presentation discussed the importance of warmer water and phosphorus as driving increases in blooms of harmful algae in Lake of the Woods. The Forum Program and Abstracts for the 2018 International Rainy-Lake of the Woods

Watershed Forum are available: www.lowwsf.com/watershed-forum

BEYOND MINNESOTA

REGIONAL

Michigan--Proposed Changes to Michigan Lead and Copper Rule: As a response to the Flint water crisis, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has proposed revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule provisions of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act. Among others, the household "action level" for lead in water will be set at 10 ppb beginning in 2024, lower than the current federal standard of 15 ppb. More details, including the draft regulations, can be viewed [here](#).

THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON D.C.

The House Natural Resources Committee will convene a hearing titled, "[Legislative Hearing on National Parks Restoration Act](#)," at 2:00 PM in the Longworth House Office Building, Room 1324.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee will convene a hearing titled, "[FY19 Budget National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#)," at 10:00 AM in the Capitol Building H-309.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee will convene a hearing titled, "[FY19 Budget -Department of Agriculture](#)," at 1:30 PM in the Rayburn House Office Building.

MEETINGS

Clean Water Council: The Clean Water Council met on March 19. Meeting highlights included detailed presentation on Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) in the Yellow Medicine Watershed (One- Watershed, One-Plan) and as well as presentations about research, evaluations and tool development by BWSR, DNR, MDA, MDH, MPCA and U of M. This was a detailed and coordinated set of presentations on work supported by the Legacy Amendment and how the work is coordinated across agencies. Contact Deepa deAlwis (651) 757-2572

UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop on Harmful Algal Blooms, March 29.

Visit: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Any8Co2eE9hKAcvk-bT-qPi5Y3MFTTr1W/view>

- **Minnesota Groundwater Conference: Groundwater Past, Present, and Future** -- April 26, 2018, St Paul. Details to follow.

- Conservation Minnesota and Freshwater Society are sponsoring the: **State of Water Conference**. Learn more about protecting the lakes and rivers you love on **April 13-14 at the Breezy Point Resort**. Registration deadline is March 31st. [Register now!](#)
- May 1-3: MN-ND-SD AWWA **Surface Water Treatment Workshop**; Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead; info to come: www.AWWAND.org
- May 10, 2018: **Smart Water Technology Roundtable: Workshop for IOT Solutions in Water Treatment**; Uponor, 5925 148th St W, Apple Valley; contact Steve.Riedel@state.mn.us for more info
- June 3-7, 2018: American Society of Civil Engineers **World Environmental and Water Resources Congress**; details to come at www.ewricongress.org
- July 10-12, 2018: US Water Alliance's **One Water Summit** will be at the Hyatt hotel in downtown Minneapolis; details to come.
- **WE ARE MINNESOTA WATER:** The Minnesota Historical Center, in cooperation with several state agencies will have a display at the Capitol through March 11. The display will then go on tour across the state. Visit: [We are Water MN](#) for the tour locations and dates. For more information contact: Margaret Wagner: [651-201-6488](tel:651-201-6488), margaret.wagner@state.mn.us
- **The International Association of Great Lakes Research** and Michigan Technological University are pleased to announce that the 2018 State of Lake Superior (SOLS) Conference will be held October 9-12 in Houghton, Michigan. Hosted on the MTU campus, SOLS will be a multi-day conference and include invited sessions and abstracts, plenary sessions, field trips, and associated meetings. Stay tuned for more details and the Call for Sessions in coming weeks at iaglr.org/sol/sols18.
- **The biennial 2018 Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference (UMISC)** will be a Joint Conference with the North American Invasive Species Management Association, **October 15-18, 2018** at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, MN. Abstract Submission Is Open. Deadline to Submit an Abstract for Presentation: Wednesday, April 11, 2018. They are expecting about 700 people to attend. See <https://www.umisc.net/> or contact Doug Jensen, conference co-chair.
- **Reservoir Sedimentation:** The nation's 90,000 dams and reservoirs constitute a critical component of the country's infrastructure ensuring the stability of water and energy supplies and flood risk management. However, the reservoir storage capacity, essential to meeting these purposes, has been filling with sediment. The Subcommittee on Sedimentation's National Reservoir Sedimentation and Sustainability Team presents sustainable solutions to reservoir sediment management. .To register for the webinars, go to: <https://cires.colorado.edu/events/sedimentation-management-multi-purpose-reservoirs-federal-perspective>