

**BCWMC Plan Update Workshop  
November 20, 2024**

**Notes and Suggested Responses**

Highlighting indicates a staff-recommended change or note

**Group A Notes**

Facilitator: Eric Eckman

Commissioners: Alternate Commissioners Schultz and Leonardson

Notetaker: Stephanie Johnson

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**1. Organizational Capacity and Staffing**

Schultz: BCWMC is a very lean organization; can see that could sometimes impact our ability to be effective. I think there's a justification to consider expanding, while also be mindful to be good stewards of the public dollar.

Leonardon: I agree.

Schultz: Related to the statement within the "Desired future condition" about being most efficient and effective - One thing that we're going to also need to aware of is that if and when we bring a new person on (i.e., a replacement for Laura), we'll need to expect that we're going to experience some inefficiencies during that transition.

No edits. Issue Statement, Future Condition, and Goals all look good.

**2. BCWMC funding mechanisms**

Tied to first issue and related statements.

No edits. Issue Statement, Future Condition, and Goals all look good.

**3. Progress Assessment**

Do we need to expand 3B (*Adapt implementation activities to reflect changing conditions or pace of progress*) (or add a 3C) to include also being open to adapting goals, if needed, over the course of the 10-year plan cycle based on results of assessment?

Recognize that this would trigger a minor plan amendment. [Plan amendment process will be described in the narrative of the Plan Implementation section, including how the process relates to updating Plan goals]

Remainder of Issue Statement, Future Condition, and other Goals all look good.

#### 4. Projects and Programs Implemented through a DEIA lens

Schultz: How are we defining 'equitably'? Simply stating "equitable" is subjective and open to interpretation.

Eckman: Good observation. Suggest including a definition of equity within the plan; and some information on how we're going to review / define that as applied to our work.

Other language in the issue statement, desired future condition and goal statements seem okay.

#### 5. Public ditch management

Clarify the Desired Future Condition statement to be clear that we're not saying that we're going to walk away from the ditch (i.e., "abandon" does not literally mean abandon); but, that this entails simply a change to it's classification. Ensure language reads that we're abandoning the terminology (classification by BWSR), not the water feature. [include this idea within context of implementation section.]

#### 6. Carbon Footprint

Reads fine.

### EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

#### 1. Public Awareness and Action

Issue statement is a bit awkward (clunky) in its current reading. Can we rework this to read more clearly? Even just some small reworking might help. *"The ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders may be limited by a lack of knowledge and resources ....."*

In response to additional suggestions in Group C, staff suggests rewording issue statement to: *Lack of knowledge and resources for action limit the ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders to be good caretakers of the BCWMC waterbodies and ecosystems.*

Desired future condition – sounds good.

Appears to be a typo in the wording of Goal 1A. This needs to be fixed. Idea is good, but wording needs to be fixed.

Goals 1B and 1C are good as is.

#### 2. Engagement of Diverse Communities

Goal 2B. Suggestion to change the word "relevant". Maybe change to "impacted" or something like that?

Staff suggests rewording goal to: *Seek, consider, and respond to input from all impacted communities as part of the BCWMC's plans, programs, and projects.*

Goals 2A and 2C. Read well.

Think about how the land acknowledgement statement can best get integrated into the commission's work. Is there some way that the acknowledgment statement can be brought into this section?

Staff suggests including language in the context of this section that explicitly indicates the BCWMC's intent to carry out the action included in the land and water acknowledgement statement – including *“seeking to identify and integrate Native wisdom by collaborating with Indigenous peoples and communities to reduce the impacts of climate change and improve the ecosystem health for all living beings in the watershed.”*]

### **3. Recreation Opportunities**

No edits. Issue Statement, Future Condition, and Goals all look good.

Overall editorial comment: currently using periods inconsistently throughout the goal statements. Will need to clean that up for the final draft.

## **Group B Notes**

Facilitator: Ben Scharenbroich

Notes: Karen Chandler

Participants: Commissioner Sicora, New Hope TAC Nick Macklem, Minneapolis TAC Liz Stout, MPRB TAC Rachael Crabb

### **EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

#### **1. Public Awareness and Action**

Discussion about importance of educating about the Flood Control Project and the BCWMC itself (and its role in the community). Discussion about specific educational messages, about how there should be increased visibility of the BCWMC, and a need for residents to understand and care about actions upstream contributing to impacts downstream.

Staff recommends revising goal 1A: *Increase public knowledge of and participation in programs or practices for waterbody and ecosystem caretaking*

#### **2. Engagement of Diverse Communities**

Discussion on how Commission should not just hear and “respond” to input from diverse communities but potentially revise implementation activities and/or incorporate what's learned from input received. Also comments about how continued communications and relationship building requires consistent staff. There were also comments on potential actions related to Indigenous place names and teaching

including updating the website and interpretive signs. Finally, there was discussion about the need to update the website to improve accessibility.

**Staff Notes:** While there may be a need to update language in goal 2B, staff believes the goal is okay as currently written. The comments suggest “respond” is being interpreted only from a communication perspective, but the response may also be changes to the project/program (design, scope, timing, etc.) Current goal statement: *Seek, consider, and respond to input from all relevant communities as part of the BCWMC’s plans, programs, and projects.*

**Staff Recommendation for slight revision to goal 2C:** Incorporate Dakota place names, history, culture, and Indigenous knowledge into BCWMC projects and programs.

### **3. Recreation Opportunities**

Discussion about how the public interacts with water (usually passively) and how experiences in or beside waters can improve stewardship. Comment on how even fishing piers or docks into lakes or ponds would be beneficial. There was also a recommendation to acknowledge importance of waters not classified by BCWMC as “priority waters.” (see recommended changes to goal 3A with Group C comments.)

## **ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

### **1. Organizational Capacity and Staffing**

Discussion noted that commitment to institutional knowledge and retention of Commissioners is important; related actions include Commissioner onboarding.

Group B suggested adding “optimizing retention and institutional knowledge” to the desired future condition or current goals or adding a new goal.

**Staff notes:** Retention of board members and staff could be included as a metric related to the existing goal: Achieve optimal organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

### **2. BCWMC Funding Mechanisms**

Comment that funding needs depends a lot of staffing.

### **3. Progress Assessment**

Discussion noted that adaptive management is critical and the process for amending the Plan will be exercised during implementation. [See comments from Group A.]

## Group C Notes

**Facilitator:** Commissioner Cesnik

**Notes:** Greg Williams

**Participants:** Commissioner Pentel, Commissioner Twiford

### ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

#### 1. Organizational Capacity and Staffing

- Wondered who will perform the organizational assessment? An outside firm?
- The “likely not sufficient” in the issue statement seems vague and unsure; prefer something like “capacity may not be sufficient”
  - o CT/CC concurred
- Noted that there may be a lot of organizational inertia to change structure
- Structure may be sufficient if additional staff capacity is added
- Goal 1B: 10-year goal language to “achieve optimal organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness” seems difficult to evaluate with certainty
  - o Alternatively, consider “improve organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness.”

**Staff notes:** For the issue statement, the PSC discussed the difference between wording the statement as “may not be sufficient” vs. “likely not sufficient” and decided the latter is more accurate and better reflects reality. The PSC can reconsider this wording, as desired.

**Staff suggests revising the 1B goal:** *Implement outcomes of organizational assessment to improve organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness.*

#### 2. BCWMC Funding Mechanisms

- Suggest rephrasing the issue statement as an opportunity, leading with what is needed versus why it is a problem (i.e., lead with the solution); for example: “Additional funding mechanisms are needed to achieve robust, efficient, and equitable outcomes.”

**Staff recommends rewording the issue statement:** *Additional funding sources and/or alternate funding mechanisms for BCWMC administration and implementation are needed to achieve the most efficient, equitable, and robust outcomes .*

#### 3. Progress Assessment

- Consider an annual progress assessment during the first few years of Plan implementation. If there are new activities and they build on each other, making progress at the beginning is key.
  - o In the large group, others noted the need for a process to revise goals during Plan implementation. Laura noted that the Plan amendment process allows for that.
- It will be helpful to see all of the Plan actions scheduled in a timeline to see how they are connected and how much of the Plan implementation is “front loaded.” This will help inform capacity.

#### 4. Projects and Programs Implemented with DEIA Lens

- Goal 4B speaks to achieving diversity in representation on the Board of Commissioners. If the organizational structure changes, the process for selecting Commissioners vs. Manager appointments may change, altering this and potentially other goals and actions.
  - o To what degree should the Plan language consider organizational structure uncertainty, versus writing the Plan assuming a joint powers organizational structure and revising the Plan, as needed, if things change?

**Staff recommends** an approach of developing the implementation schedule to include all desirable actions with defined relative priority. The Plan narrative will acknowledge the potential discrepancy between capacity and implementation scope and reference annual planning as a process to align capacity and implementation at a more immediate timescale.

#### 5. Public Ditch Management

- It would be helpful to see the public ditches on a map when discussed in the Plan.

**Staff comment:** Public ditches will be included and labeled on a map within the plan (see Figure 2-9 in current plan.)

#### 6. Carbon Footprint of BCWMC Projects

- This is a lower priority issue for BCWMC, in the current political landscape it is more important than ever that organizations like BCWMC continue to consider climate impacts.
- There is a lot of room within this topic and BCWMC activities related to this topic will need to be narrowly focused.
  - o Use purchasing power to prioritize contractors or companies that use local products or commit to emission reduction
- May be difficult or expensive to get quantitative data to support BCWMC decisions related to this topic

### EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

#### 1. Public Awareness and Action

- Consider re-writing the issues statement as more of an opportunity. As written it may present residents as the problem, versus the thing the BCWMC can most directly influence (i.e., the information, funds, etc.).
  - o Consider “Lack of knowledge and resources for action limit the ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders to be good caretakers of BCWMC waterbodies and ecosystems.”
- Globally, consider identifying “issue statements” as “challenges”, or “opportunities.”

**Staff recommends using suggested wording:** *Lack of knowledge and resources for action limit the ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders to be good caretakers of the BCWMC waterbodies and ecosystems.*

Goal 1C: Consider replacing “citizen science” with “resident science”; it is a recognized phrase, but many organizations are moving away from references to citizenship.

**Staff recommends revising Goal 1C:** *Support community science and volunteer efforts.*

## **2. Engagement of Diverse Community Issue**

- Annual water ceremony action should be linked to the public action issue in addition to this issue
  - o It was noted that actions will likely be cross-referenced to multiple goals and/or issues in the final Plan format
- Actions should leverage local digital media publications and social media. BCWMC can post meeting announcements and links on “Next Door” app and similar media. Such tools would be especially useful to share info on issues applicable to broad audiences like winter salt use.

## **3. Recreation Opportunities Issue**

- Goal 3A: Consider expanding beyond priority waterbodies (e.g., recent Sohacki Park work)

**Staff recommends revising Goal 3A:** *Support recreational uses of, and access to, lakes, streams, and natural areas, particularly in underserved communities.*

## **Group D Notes**

Facilitator: Alternate Commissioner Kennedy

Recorder: Laura Jester

Participants: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth, Alternate Commissioner Vadali, St. Louis Park TAC Erick Francis

### **ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **1. Organizational capacity and staffing**

Discussion and questions about the actual need for additional staff. Erick asked if there’s enough work for a full-time administrator or need for additional consultant time. He noted that the organization seems to function well already and wondered if there’s a real need for change. Vadali noted that goals should identify what would change, what capacity gaps exist, how accomplishments would improve with increased capacity. As an example, Laura noted that public-private partnerships will likely be needed more and more to implement BMPs that aren’t on public property. That requires more staff for outreach, relationship building, project management.

Gwin-Lenth wondered if there was a goal the Commission had set in the past that was unattained due to lack of capacity. He wondered if there was historical context to learn from.

**Staff recommendation:** Incorporate the concepts of assessing existing and potential capacity and staffing gaps into context for this section.

## **2. BWCMC Funding Mechanisms**

Comment on considering adding the concept of a budget reserve into the desired future condition. Laura explained the BCWMC has fiscal policies and cannot hold a large budget reserve without a need or reason. Discussion how fitting BMPs into the built environment gets more and more expensive as space becomes tighter. Comment that funding and staffing assistance with BMP/CIP maintenance would be valuable. Laura listed some areas where additional staff would be beneficial including grant writing and management (there are grant opportunities that are passed on because of lack of staff capacity), BMP maintenance and tracking, partnering with other agencies, etc.

## **3. Progress Assessment**

Comment on how we need to measure the right things and about how adaptive management is valuable.

## **4. Projects and Programs Implemented Through DEIA Lens**

Comment about how diversity and equity is an issue across all jurisdictions and is important to keep as a goal. Comment on how Commission should make sure that marginal and minority groups are engaged.

Overall comment (across all categories): Gwin-Lenth indicated that many goals seem nebulous in how they would be achieved and that the political environment and climate change may bring unexpected challenges – so flexibility is critical.

[Group D did not have time to discuss Education and Engagement issues/goals.]