



AGENDA
Food, Land & Water Project
Surface Water Quality Workgroup Meeting

February 21, 2017
Hotel Mead - Wisconsin Rapids, WI

- 8:30 am** **Continental Breakfast and Conversation**
- 9:00** **Plenary Session With Other Workgroups (Jim VandenBrook)**
- Welcome
 - Progress Report
 - Today's Plan and Next Steps
- 9:30** **Welcome and Summary of Project So Far (Facilitator and Co-Chairs)**
- 9:45** **Begin Workgroup Discussion Based on Preliminary Draft Outline**
- Surface water quality goals
 - Objectives
 - Strategies
- 12:00** **Lunch and informal conversation (including other Workgroups)**
- 1:00** **Continue Workgroup Discussion**
- 2:30** **How to move forward?**
- Comments and discussion
 - Plans for final meeting
- 3:00** **Adjourn**



Surface Water Quality Workgroup Meeting Points for Discussion

Based on discussions to date, the Workgroup is focusing on the following key issues:

1. It appears that we cannot achieve our water quality goals without increasing public and private investments. How can we mobilize the necessary investments? What level of investment are we willing to make? Who should pay?
2. It appears that we cannot achieve our water quality goals within a reasonable time frame unless we “step up the pace.” Are we willing to do so? What will it take?
3. Do we have a clear understanding of what is happening “on the ground” and in the water? Can we improve that understanding? Are we doing an adequate job of water quality monitoring and conservation compliance monitoring?
4. Do we have a reliable system for determining the level of NM compliance? Is there a more systematic, and nuanced, way to survey NM compliance?
5. Do land use decision-makers (landowners, agronomists, government officials, etc.) understand their compliance responsibilities and options? Can we do better?
6. How can we increase farmer participation? What are the key barriers to participation and compliance? Are compliance incentives adequate? Should we consider others?
7. Are we focusing on the most serious problems? Are we pursuing the most cost-effective solutions? Can we do better?
8. Can we do a better job of aligning federal, state, county and local efforts to achieve our water quality goals? What would it take?
9. Can we do a better job of aligning public and private efforts to achieve our water quality goals? What would it take? What is the role of producer-led projects?
10. Agriculture is changing rapidly. Farms are getting bigger and more complex. Absentee ownership and lease arrangements are increasing. More conservation compliance tasks are being delegated to crop consultants, manure haulers, farm suppliers and other third parties. Does our current approach address these changes? Can we do better?
11. How does NM compliance vary between crop and livestock operations? Are there different compliance incentives, or different barriers to compliance? Can livestock siting ordinances help?
12. What is the role, if any, of manure treatment? Does it work? Is it economically viable? Who will pay?
13. How are land use trends affecting farm management options, including manure spreading?
14. To what extent should we focus on “nonpoint source” vs. “point source” discharge reduction? Farm vs. urban “nonpoint source” reduction? Are we pursuing a fair and cost-effective strategy? Can we do better?
15. Can we provide local flexibility, while ensuring reasonably consistent statewide regulation of our agriculture and food industries? Can we be responsive to local needs and concerns, while addressing statewide priorities?
16. Can we mobilize the creativity and resources of private business, including dairy and food supply chains, cooperatives, bankers, entrepreneurs, farm supply businesses, and farmers themselves, to achieve conservation goals? Can we increase public understanding and support?
17. Can we ensure that taxpayers are getting good “value” for their farm conservation dollars? Can we ensure reasonable public accountability and transparency?
18. Can we achieve our water quality goals, while maintaining the competitiveness of Wisconsin’s agriculture and food industries?