

Drainage Work Group Process Summary

Purposes

The stakeholder Drainage Work Group (DWG) has been meeting since 2006 for the following purposes:

- Foster science-based, mutual understanding about drainage topics and issues; and
- Develop recommendations for drainage system management and related water management, with a focus on updates of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103E Drainage and related provisions.

Membership

- Open to all drainage stakeholders who are willing to invest time in DWG meetings and associated work on behalf of a drainage stakeholder organization they represent.

General Work Process

- The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) coordinates the DWG in accordance with MN Statutes [Section 103B.101, Subd. 13. Drainage stakeholder coordination](#), as recommended by the DWG.
- The DWG generally meets monthly on second Thursdays of the month between legislative sessions, but can add or cancel meetings as necessary and workable.
- DWG work involves a group decision-making, informed consent process. Members can participate in identification of priority topics / issues and associated investigation, development and refinement of recommendations or other applicable documentation of DWG work and conclusions (products).
- The DWG uses subgroups for some topics between DWG meetings to best utilize time and expertise of members and others to investigate topics and provide recommendations to the full DWG.
- Topic experts are invited to present information to the DWG to inform and enhance topic discussions.
- When the DWG began in 2006, it agreed to operate by consensus for its products. Full consensus provides the Legislature, Governor and all stakeholders the best assurance that recommendations have been fully vetted by stakeholders, and is a DWG goal. The need for an alternative to full consensus has arisen. If, after extensive DWG discussion and subgroup efforts, full consensus cannot be achieved, a consensus report and non-consensus report option can be used to deliver DWG products to stakeholder organizations and the Legislature.
- A timing goal is to typically have policy recommendations complete by November 15 to enable effective stakeholder and legislator communications before the next legislative session.

Definition of Consensus

- A drainage stakeholder member and the organization(s) s/he represents **can live with** the applicable DWG recommendations, which can involve compromise.
- A drainage stakeholder member and the organization(s) s/he represents **will not oppose** the applicable DWG consensus recommendations.

Member Responsibilities

- Attend DWG meetings to represent their stakeholder organization(s) and perspectives. Review meeting materials, provide input, and communicate with their stakeholder organization and others between meetings, as appropriate. Participation is necessary to have a voice and to respect the DWG process.
- Respect the perspectives of DWG members, including taking turns speaking at meetings, actively listening to differing viewpoints, and helping to resolve disagreements by finding common ground.
- Support the goal of full consensus for DWG recommendations and honor the definition of consensus above. State any opposition early and clearly, including explanation. If full consensus can't be achieved, respect the consensus report and non-consensus report process.
- Share DWG consensus recommendations, non-consensus report (if applicable), and associated information with the stakeholder organization the member represents and legislators, as appropriate.

Process Notes:

- 1) When the consensus report and non-consensus report option is used, the consensus report shall include consensus of the Drainage Work Group members representing:
 - *Drainage Authorities:* Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), and Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD)
 - *Environmental Group:* Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA)
 - *Farm Groups:* Minnesota Farm Bureau (MFB), Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA), and Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA)
 - *State Agencies:* Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)
- 2) When the consensus report and non-consensus report option is used:
 - The non-consensus member(s) are responsible to prepare a non-consensus report in a timely manner, including their concerns, rationale and alternatives to the consensus report recommendations they can't live with. Assistance will be provided by the DWG Coordinator to help clarify and verify pertinent facts.
 - The consensus report and non-consensus report should be provided together to drainage stakeholder organizations and the Legislature.