

466B.3 Water resources coordinating council.

1. *Council established.* A water resources coordinating council is established within the department of agriculture and land stewardship.

2. *Purpose.* The purpose of the council shall be to preserve and protect Iowa's water resources, and to coordinate the management of those resources in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner. In the pursuit of this purpose, the council shall use an integrated approach to water resource management, recognizing that insufficiencies exist in current approaches and practices, as well as in funding sources and the utilization of funds. The integrated approach used by the council shall attempt to overcome old categories, labels, and obstacles with the primary goal of managing the state's water resources comprehensively rather than compartmentally.

3. *Accountability.* The success of the council's efforts shall ultimately be measured by the following outcomes:

a. Whether the citizens of Iowa can more easily organize local watershed projects.

b. Whether the citizens of Iowa can more easily access available funds and water quality program resources.

c. Whether the funds, programs, and regulatory efforts coordinated by the council eventually result in a long-term improvement to the quality of surface water in Iowa. To evaluate the progress achieved over time toward the goals of the Iowa nutrient reduction strategy and the United States environmental protection agency gulf hypoxia action plan, the baseline condition shall be calculated for the time period from 1980 to 1996.

d. Whether the potential for flood damage in each watershed in the state has been reduced.

4. *Membership.* The council shall consist of the following members:

a. The director of the department of natural resources or the director's designee.

b. The director of the division of soil conservation and water quality within the department of agriculture and land stewardship or the director's designee.

c. The director of health and human services or the director's designee.

d. The director of the department of homeland security and emergency management or the director's designee.

e. The dean of the college of agriculture and life sciences at Iowa state university or the dean's designee.

f. The dean of the college of public health at the university of Iowa or the dean's designee.

g. The dean of the college of natural sciences at the university of northern Iowa or the dean's designee.

h. The director of transportation or the director's designee.

i. The director of the economic development authority or the director's designee.

j. The director of the Iowa finance authority or the director's designee.

k. The secretary of agriculture, who shall be the chairperson, or the secretary's designee.

As the chairperson, and in order to further the coordination efforts of the council, the secretary may invite representatives from any other public agency, private organization, business, citizen group, or nonprofit entity to give public input at council meetings, provided the entity has an interest in the coordinated management of land resources, soil conservation, flood mitigation, or water quality. The secretary shall also invite and solicit advice from the following:

(1) The director of the Iowa water science center of the United States geological survey or the director's designee.

(2) The state conservationist from the Iowa office of the United States department of agriculture's natural resources conservation service or the state conservationist's designee.

(3) The executive director for Iowa from the United States department of agriculture's farm services agency or the executive director's designee.

(4) The state director for Iowa from the United States department of agriculture's office of rural development or the state director's designee.

(5) The director of region seven of the United States environmental protection agency or the director's designee.

(6) The corps commander from the United States army corps of engineers' Rock Island district or the commander's designee.

l. The dean of the college of engineering at the university of Iowa or the dean's designee.

5. *Meetings and quorum.*

a. The council shall be convened by the secretary of agriculture at least quarterly.

b. A majority of the members fixed by statute shall constitute a quorum, and any action taken by the council must be adopted by a majority of the voting membership.

6. *Duties and powers.*

a. The council shall engage in the regular coordination of water resource-related functions, including protection strategies, planning, assessment, prioritization, review, concurrence, advocacy, and education.

b. In coordinating water resource-related functions, the council may do all of the following:

(1) Consider the steps necessary to address the planning, management, and implementation of water resource improvement.

(2) Identify ways to facilitate communication and participation among all water resource stakeholders, including owners of land in Iowa whether they are residents or not.

(3) Identify inefficiencies in current programs and recommend ways to eliminate duplicative services.

(4) Improve the availability and management of water resource information.

(5) Provide incentives for, and recognition of, environmental excellence.

(6) Regularly assess and identify measurable improvements in water quality.

(7) Oversee the complete, statewide regional watershed assessment, prioritization, and planning process described in [section 466B.5](#), including a short-term interim program and a long-term comprehensive state water quality and quantity plan updated every five years as provided in [sections 466B.5](#) and [466B.6](#).

(8) Develop a protocol which identifies high-priority watersheds, including local and community-based subwatersheds, and which appropriately directs resources to those watersheds.

(9) Review best available technologies on a regular basis, so that investments of time and program resources can be prioritized and directed to projects that will best and most effectively improve water quality and reduce flood damage within regional and community subwatersheds.

(10) Review voluntary, performance-based standards for water resource management, land management, and soil conservation.

(11) Develop a protocol for assigning multiagency teams to regional watersheds and local subwatersheds and guide those teams in the coordination of citizen and agency activities within those watersheds.

(12) Engage in dialogue with, and pursue efforts to make cooperative agreements with, other states when a watershed extends beyond borders of this state.

(13) Enter into agreements and make contracts with third parties for the performance of duties imposed by [this chapter](#).

(14) Prepare a memorandum of understanding identifying the roles and responsibilities of council members in the coordination of the implementation of community-based subwatershed improvement plans. The memorandum shall be a commitment by the agencies participating in council meetings to reach consensus regarding communications with subwatershed planning units.

c. The council shall develop recommendations for policies and funding promoting a watershed management approach to reduce the adverse impact of future flooding on this state's residents, businesses, communities, and soil and water quality. The council shall consider policies and funding options for various strategies to reduce the impact of flooding including but not limited to additional floodplain regulation; wetland protection, restoration, and construction; the promulgation and implementation of statewide storm water management standards; conservation easements and other land management; perennial ground cover and other agricultural conservation practices; pervious pavement, bioswales, and other urban conservation practices; and permanent or temporary water

retention structures. In developing recommendations, the council shall consult with hydrological and land use experts, representatives of cities, counties, drainage and levee districts, agricultural interests, and soil and water conservation districts, and other urban and regional planning experts.

2008 Acts, ch 1034, §3; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §139; 2009 Acts, ch 146, §8 – 12; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §62; 2011 Acts, ch 118, §85, 89; 2011 Acts, ch 119, §1 – 5; 2012 Acts, ch 1021, §86; 2012 Acts, ch 1023, §65; 2013 Acts, ch 29, §58; 2015 Acts, ch 29, §114; 2015 Acts, ch 103, §52; 2018 Acts, ch 1001, §21; 2018 Acts, ch 1152, §11; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1172, 2151

Referred to in §466B.2

Subsection 4, paragraphs c and j amended