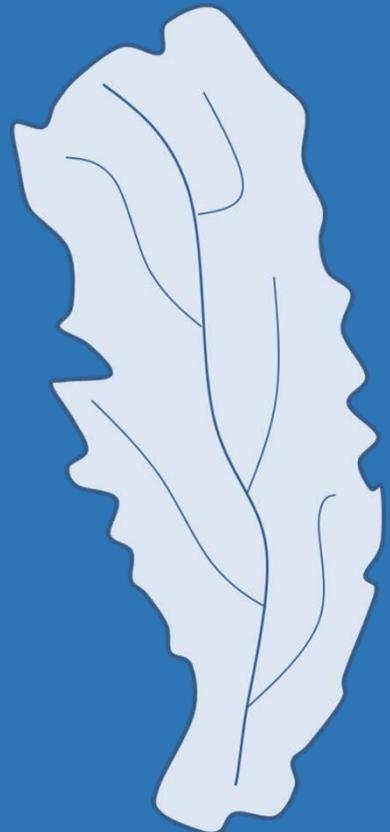


WATERSHED PLANNING
ADVISORY COUNCIL
2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Legislative Background

The Watershed Planning Advisory Council (WPAC) was established by the Iowa Legislature (Iowa Code 466B.31) to assemble a diverse group of stakeholders to make recommendations to state and federal agencies to protect water resources in Iowa. (See more detail in Appendix A.)

WPAC met on October 9, 2019 to listen to three presentations based on previous areas of agreement listed below, and then broke into small groups to develop recommendations based on SMART goal principals and the ideas proposed within these three categories.

Presentations were:

- Iowa Nutrient Research Center Update and Opportunities in Nutrient Management – Matt Helmers, Director, Iowa Nutrient Research Center, Iowa State University
- Overview of Recent Study on Stream Nitrate and Monitoring – Chris Jones, Research Engineer, IHR-Hydroscience & Engineering, University of Iowa
- Update on the Governor's Flood Advisory Task Force - Joyce Flinn, Director, Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management
- WMA structure and utilizing funding sources - John Swanson, Water Resources Planner, Polk County Public Works

Three small working session groups were organized at random with each group having five voting members. Once the recommendations were made within the small groups, we reconvened to discuss each recommendation and propose changes to language and ask clarifying questions. The group then voted on each of the recommendations. Of the 19 organizations listed in Iowa Code 466B.31, 14 were present to develop recommendations and participate in voting on the recommendations.

Present organizations were:

- One member selected by the Iowa League of Cities.
- One member selected by the Iowa Association of Business and Industry.
- One member selected by the Iowa Water Pollution Control Association.
- One member selected by the Iowa Rural Water Association.
- One member selected by the Iowa Environmental Council.
- One member selected by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.
- One member selected by the Iowa Corn Growers Association.
- One member selected by the Iowa Soybean Association.
- One member selected by the Iowa Pork Producers Council.
- One member selected by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Iowa.
- One person representing the Department of Natural Resources selected by the Director.
- One member selected by the Iowa Conservation Alliance.
- One member selected by the Iowa Floodplain and Stormwater Management Association.
- One member selected by Iowa Rivers Revival

Absent:

- One member from Growing Green Communities
- One member from Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- One member of Iowa Conservation Alliance
- One member from Iowa Drainage District Association
- One member from Agribusiness Association of Iowa

Absent non-voting members:

- Two members of the senate: Senator Dan Zumbach, Senator Joe Bolkcom
- Two members of the house of representatives: Rep. Charles Isenhart, Rep. John Wills

WPAC Recommendations for 2020 Legislature

1. Monitoring and Measurement

- i. Where applicable, require Watershed Management Authorities (WMAs) and watershed projects to integrate water monitoring activities into their project applications. Funding originating from Senate File 512 will be based on grant application process that would prioritize WMAs or projects with existing or strong watershed plans.

2. Partnerships

- i. The officers of WPAC and ex officio members are tasked to bring the annual report to the legislators to provide the report and a verbal presentation to the legislature. The officers will then report back to WPAC on legislator's comments to inform the next year's working session.
- ii. To enable successful, long-term watershed project implementation, consideration for funding should be given to projects that have demonstrated sufficient involvement of partners within a watershed project. Quantifiable measurements of success may include greater awareness of watershed goals and practice implementation on the ground.
- iii. For watershed projects to be effective long-term, watershed coordinators should be funded by the state with full benefits. By funding coordinators long-term, this will enable more effective relationships with partners.
- iv. For partnerships to be more effective at the watershed level, we encourage broader public involvement beyond WMA members and agencies. Partners and the public should be invited to annual statewide watershed or conservation-based meeting to share updates and opportunities for involvement in the watershed. This will be quantified by measuring how many partners and cooperators are involved in projects.

3. Economics

- i. In order to holistically evaluate the cost/benefit ratio of flood protection, we recommend that Iowa encourages Congress to authorize the Army Corps of Engineers to incorporate water quality and ecosystem benefits of flood mitigation practices beyond avoiding disaster recovery costs.
- ii. In order to accelerate the adoption of new research and data into practice, we recommend dedicating resources to a data analytic staff position at the Iowa Nutrient Research Center and the Iowa Flood Center that analyzes the vast amount of publicly available data and build capacity for connecting researchers with water managers.

- iii. In order to achieve Iowa's water goals in an economically feasible systems approach, we recommend incorporating new data and recommendations from all existing efforts into future policy recommendations.
- iv. In order to accelerate investment in ag/urban partnerships for the benefit of water quality, flood control, source water protection and overall resilient watershed communities, we recommend commissioning a policy review to identify legal and financial barriers to innovation (e.g. land purchases outside of city limits, procurement law), issue recommendations to remediate those barriers, and allowing a watershed to pilot those recommendations on a trial basis.

2019 Background Working Sessions

In June 2019, WPAC Chair John Whitaker, representing the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Iowa, requested that each member of the WPAC present provide input as to what they would like to see in the next meeting where recommendations will be developed. Suggestions from the WPAC members informed the agenda in respect to invited speakers as well as the format and length of the meeting.

The Iowa Water Center

For the fourth year, the Iowa Water Center (IWC) has continued to be a valuable partner to the WPAC. As an unbiased research-based organization who is not a member of WPAC, this group functions as a third-party facilitator for WPAC activity.

This year, the IWC has contributed by taking meeting minutes, helping identify and invite presenters for meetings, running small group sessions, and creating a press release kit for all WPAC members to use if they wish.

2020 Meetings

New chair and vice chair candidates will be nominated and voted upon in 2020, if recommended by WPAC members. Plans to modify tasks and targets within the recommendations will be planned for the first meeting and creating recommendations will be the main topic of a second meeting in the summer and fall of 2020.

Background

The Watershed Planning Advisory Council (WPAC) was established by the 2010 Iowa Legislature (see Appendix A: Iowa Code 466B.31) to assemble a diverse group of stakeholders to review research and make recommendations to state and federal agencies regarding methods to protect water resources in Iowa, assure an adequate supply of water, mitigate and prevent floods, and coordinate the management of the state's resources in a sustainable, fiscally responsible, and environmentally conscientious manner.

The voting members of WPAC (see Appendix B) consist of representatives of designated nongovernmental organizations as well as representatives appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the Department of Natural Resources. Nonvoting

members include two members of the Iowa Senate and two members of the Iowa House of Representatives.

Many of the organizations that make up WPAC were involved in the Watershed Quality Planning Taskforce (WQPTF) that was called for by the Iowa Legislature in 2006 to make recommendations on water quality programs and the need to improve water quality and reduce pollution from both point and nonpoint sources (Senate File 2363). In November 2007, the WQPTF produced a consensus report:

<http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/WPAC/pdf/finallegislative-report2007.pdf>. The WQPTF recommendations were considered by the Iowa Legislature in 2008, resulting in the creation of a Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC):

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/466B.pdf>.

WPAC continues to consult with representatives of the WRCC, other governmental and non-governmental organizations and provides recommendations on watershed planning and effective implementation.

Appendix A: Iowa Code 466B.31

WATER PROTECTION AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT, §466B.31

466B.31 Watershed planning advisory council.

1. A watershed planning advisory council is established for purposes of assembling a diverse group of stakeholders to review research and make recommendations to various state entities regarding methods to protect water resources in the state, assure an adequate supply of water, mitigate and prevent floods, and coordinate the management of those resources in a sustainable, fiscally responsible, and environmentally responsible manner.

The advisory council may seek input from councils of governments or other organizations in the development of its recommendations. The advisory council shall meet once a year and at other times as deemed necessary to meet the requirements of this section. The advisory council may appoint a task force to assist the advisory council in completing its duties.

2. The watershed planning advisory council shall consist of all of the following members:

a. The voting members of the advisory council shall include all of the following:

- (1) One member selected by the Iowa association of municipal utilities.
- (2) One member selected by the Iowa league of cities.
- (3) One member selected by the Iowa association of business and industry.
- (4) One member selected by the Iowa water pollution control association.
- (5) One member selected by the Iowa rural water association.
- (6) One member selected by growing green communities.
- (7) One member selected by the Iowa environmental council.
- (8) One member selected by the Iowa farm bureau federation.
- (9) One member selected by the Iowa corn growers association.
- (10) One member selected by the Iowa soybean association.
- (11) One member selected by the Iowa pork producers council.
- (12) One member selected by the soil and water conservation districts of Iowa.
- (13) One person representing the department of agriculture and land stewardship selected by the secretary of agriculture.
- (14) One person representing the department of natural resources selected by the director.
- (15) Two members selected by the Iowa conservation alliance.
- (16) One member selected by the Iowa drainage district association.
- (17) One member selected by the agribusiness association of Iowa.
- (18) One member selected by the Iowa floodplain and storm water management association.
- (19) One member selected by Iowa rivers revival.

b. The nonvoting members of the advisory council shall include all of the following:

- (1) Two members of the senate. One senator shall be appointed by the majority leader of the senate and one senator shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate.
- (2) Two members of the house of representatives. One member shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and one member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives.
- (3) By December 1 of each year, the watershed planning advisory council shall submit a report to the governor, the general assembly, the department of agriculture and land stewardship, the department of natural resources, and the water resources coordinating council. The report shall include recommendations regarding all of the following:

a. Improving water quality and optimizing the costs of voluntarily achieving and maintaining water quality standards.

- b.* Creating economic incentives for voluntary nonpoint source load reductions, point source discharge reductions beyond those required by the federal Water Pollution Control Act, implementation of pollution prevention programs, wetland restoration and creation, and the development of emerging pollution control technologies.
- c.* Facilitating the implementation of total maximum daily loads, urban storm water control programs, and nonpoint source management practices required or authorized under the federal Water Pollution Control Act. This paragraph shall not be construed to obviate the requirement to develop a total maximum daily load for waters that do not meet water quality standards as required by section 303(d) of the federal Water Pollution Control Act or to delay implementation of a total maximum daily load that has been approved by the department and the director.
- d.* Providing incentives, methods, and practices for the development of new and more accurate and reliable pollution control quantification protocols and procedures, including but not limited to development of policy based on information and data that is publicly available and that can be verified and evaluated.
- e.* Providing greater flexibility for broader public involvement through community-based, nonregulatory, and performance-driven watershed management planning.
- f.* Assigning responsibility for monitoring flood risk, flood mitigation, and coordination with federal agencies.
- g.* Involving cities, counties, and other local and regional public and private entities in watershed improvement including but not limited to incentives for participation in a watershed management authority created under this chapter.

(4) Each year, the voting members of the advisory council shall designate one voting member as chairperson.

2010 Acts, ch 1116, §1; 2011 Acts, ch 131, §98, 158

Appendix B: WPAC Membership 2019

Organization	Member Name or Delegate
Senate Seat 1 (non-voting member)	Senator Joe Bolkcom
Senate Seat 2 (non-voting member)	Senator Dan Zumbach
House of Representatives Seat 1 (non-voting member)	Rep. Charles Isenhardt
House of Representatives Seat 2 (non-voting member)	Rep. John Wills
Agribusiness Association of Iowa	Shawn Richmond
Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship	Jake Hansen
Department of Natural Resources	Adam Schneiders
Growing Green Communities	Vacant
Iowa Association of Business and Industry	Brad Hartkopf
Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities	Laura Sarcone
Iowa Conservation Alliance Seat 1	Fred Long (Vice-chair)
Iowa Conservation Alliance Seat 2	Steve Roe
Iowa Corn Growers Association	Ben Gleason
Iowa Drainage District Association	John Torbert
Iowa Environmental Council	Alicia Vasto
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation	Rick Robinson
Iowa Floodplain and Stormwater Management	Mark Land
Iowa League of Cities	Dean Mattoon
Iowa Pork Producers Association	Drew Mogler
Iowa Rivers Revival	Robin Fortney
Iowa Rural Water Association	Gregory Huff
Iowa Soybean Association	Roger Wolf
Iowa Water Pollution Control Association	Greg Sindt
Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Iowa	John Whitaker (Chair)