

Meeting Information

July 11th, 2023

1:30 pm



In-Person Location

Twin Ponds Nature Center
1811 240th St
Ionia, IA 50645

Virtual Location/Zoom Link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81829552199?pwd=UjZySzhnaGV0c2RvaG4wZENqeHRxUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 2955 2199

Passcode: 556898

One tap mobile

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Agenda

WMA Board Meeting

Call to order

Roll call and Introductions

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the March. 12th, 2024 Minutes

New Business

Election of Officers for July 1st, 2024- June 30th, 2025- John Kurtz

Existing Officers (July 1st, 2023-June 30th, 2024)

Board Chair-John Kurtz, *Buchanan County Supervisor*

Vice Chair-Orlan Love, *City of Quasqueton*

Treasurer/Secretary, Duane Meihost, *City of Frederika*

Directors @ Large: Don Shonka, *Buchanan County*, Matt Kuhn, *Chickasaw County*, Chris Eiby, *Delaware County SWCD*, Orlan Love, *City of Quasqueton*.

Watershed Coordinator Update - Ross and Tori:

- Review New Contribution Formula
 - o Approve New Funding Request Formula: To be implemented by FY26 must be approved by Oct.2024.
- Water Sampling Update

Public Comment/ Other Partner Updates:

Opportunity for partners in attendance to update the WMA board on upcoming events or related projects.

Next Meeting Date

October, 2024

Member Entities	Population in Watershed	Proposed Contribution \$0.65/capita	Historical Contribution (FY23-FY24)
Central City	1247	\$810.55	\$600.00
City of Frederika	205	\$133.25	\$300.00
City of Aurora	168	\$109.20	
City of Dunkerton	831	\$540.15	\$600.00
City of Elma	506	\$328.90	
City of Fredericksburg	984	\$639.60	\$600.00
City of Hazleton	712	\$462.80	
City of Independence	6179	\$4,016.35	\$5,000.00
City of New Hampton	3416	\$2,220.40	\$600.00
City of Quasqueton	587	\$381.55	\$600.00
City of Readlyn	855	\$555.75	\$600.00
City of Riceville	803	\$521.95	
City of Sumner	2036	\$1,323.40	
City of Tripoli	1204	\$782.60	\$600.00
City of Winthrop	822	\$534.30	\$600.00
Black Hawk County	1226	\$797.14	\$600.00
Bremer County	3675	\$2,388.95	
Buchanan County	5001	\$3,250.42	\$600.00
Chickasaw County	2808	\$1,824.95	\$600.00
Fayette County	1308	\$849.92	
Howard County	623	\$404.89	
Linn County	3815	\$2,479.43	
Mitchell County	574	\$373.25	
Black Hawk SWCD	2	\$300.00	\$600.00
Bremer SWCD	3	\$450.00	
Buchanan SWCD	4	\$600.00	\$600.00
Chickasaw SWCD	5	\$750.00	\$300.00
Delaware SWCD	2	\$300.00	\$250.00
Fayette SWCD	0	\$150.00	\$600.00
Howard SWCD	0	\$150.00	\$250.00
Linn SWCD	5	\$750.00	\$300.00
Mitchell SWCD	0	\$150.00	\$100.00
		\$29,329.71	

* SWCD contributions are based on the number of sampling sites in their county.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by WMA Chairman, John Kurtz at 1:30 pm.

Motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Michael O'Loughlin and seconded by Chris Eibey. Motion Passed.

Attendees: John Kurtz, *Buchanan County Supervisor*, Chris Eibey, *Delaware SWCD*, Ross Evelsizer, *Northeast Iowa RC&D*, Tori Nimrod, *Northeast Iowa RC&D*, Orlan Love, *City of Quasqueton*, Randy Leach, *City of Fredericksburg*, Kip Ladage, *Bremer County SWCD*, Dean Eastman, *Howard County Supervisor*, , Laura Albert and Dave Nuss, *City of Sumner*, Karmin McShane, *Linn County SWCD*, Ray Armbrrecht, *City of Fredericksburg*, Dennis Goemaat, *Linn County Conservation*, David Lehman, *Bremer County*, Steve Breitbach, *Chickasaw County*, Ben Bonar, *Buchanan County Conservation*, Mike O'Loughlin, *City of Independence*; Kim Leichtman, *Chickasaw SWCD*; Miranda Haes, *Iowa DNR*, Brian Kieleber, *Buchanan County Engineer*, Ron Lenth, *Bremer SWCD*, Sherman Lundy, *Black Hawk County SWCD*.

Motion to approve the Minutes from Dec. 5th, 2023. Motion was made by Michael O'Loughlin and seconded by Ben Bonar. Motion Passed.

New Business

New Watershed Coordinator Funding Mechanism Discussion

Coordinators and members of the Executive Committee were interested in exploring another method for requesting donations from member entities. Historically the Upper Wapsi WMA has requested a flat donation request of \$600 from each entity. The method for discussion would be to request a donation amount based on the entities population located in the Upper Wapsi Watershed. Many other WMAs use this more quantile approach. Board Chair explained that donations that are currently coming in do not satisfy what they WMA needs to support a part-time Coordinator. He explained without a Coordinator the WMA cannot function and there is no one to work on bringing additional funds to the Watershed. Upper Wapsi Coordinators explained that the new funding formula is similar to what the Maquoketa WMA uses. Coordinators showed a table of the proposed dollar requests per entity with the new funding formula. The donation request for each entity is equal to \$0.65 per person living in the watershed within their entity. For example: Chickasaw County's population living in the Upper Wapsi Watershed is equal to the percent of County area in the Watershed times the unincorporated population. This was done for each County and City entity that makes up the WMA Board. SWCD's contribution is based on the number of Sampling sites within that county.

Coordinator, Tori Nimrod explained that this method puts more pressure on the County entities, who have historically been the most inconsistent contributors, and lowers the ask of the SWCDs, who have been our best most consistent contributors. Coordinators explained they have some concerns about getting the Counties to buy into the WMA. Ladage, (Bremer County) explained that he reviews a lot of the minutes from County meetings around budget times and when WMAs are brought up they struggle to see how it benefits the County. Ross and Tori responded, that they can do a better job showing the benefits in the letter, as well as go to Supervisor meetings to explain the WMA's purpose as well. That is in addition to WMA board members representing their counties to keep pushing and

explaining the good that WMAs do for the area. This funding formula also increases the goal ask to about \$25,000/year, which gives additional room to account for entities that do not donate. **This is still a voluntary donation and member entities are not required to donate.**

Attached with the minutes are the duties of Northeast Iowa RC&D as Watershed Coordinators.

Dave Nuss and Randy Leach both commented that their communities have started collecting a Stormwater Utility Fee, which has provided the perfect avenue for their communities to fund this donation along with a large amount of other stormwater maintenance and improvement projects.

Watershed Coordinator Update:

Water Sampling Results 2023

Watershed Coordinator, Tori Nimrod explained the water quality results from 2023, which showed low nitrate concentrations throughout the watershed. Lower levels of N are likely associated with dry weather conditions, therefore nitrate applied and stored by plants remains in the soil. Phosphorus levels and bacterial levels were still high throughout most sites in the watershed. Board Chair, John Kurts commented, often times after a dry year when nitrates are low there is a large flush of nutrients the following year when rain fall occurs. Coordinator Ross Evelsizer agreed, and further explained nitrate is moved via water, so if rains to some this spring we can expect a large flush of nitrates in our surface waters.

Coordinators are still working with Martin St. Clair on organizing water sampling efforts for 2024. St. Claire took another position at the University of Iowa, but is working with area watersheds to continue water quality analysis at Coe College.

Bill [HF 2614](#) Page 17-21

Bill has been renamed to HF 2642. A bill was introduced earlier this month that included some language regarding WMAs in Iowa. Originally the Bill included language that said WMAs could not educate about water quality. This statement has since been eliminated. The Bill also explains that if WMAs pursue implementation of water quality practices they must abide by the Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Ross and Tori, explained this language is not a big deal. Most grant and other funding sources for water quality improvement already include language that practices must follow practice guidelines in the Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Lastly, the major issue in this bill is that it would require WMAs in the state to change their name to "Watershed Partnership." While many board members agree that Watershed Management Authority is not a great name, changing it now would require re-filing the 28E agreements for each member entity, which would be a huge undertaking for Coordinators and eat up all of the money raised through donations in a year.

The bill is now at the House waiting approval. Coordinators encourage WMA board members to reach out to their local legislatures and voice the complications of changing the name to Watershed Partnership and to include a statement that allows for current WMAs to remain WMAs or to cross that language out. Iowa Center for Cultural Affairs is the main advocate for WMAs regularly at the Capital. Coordinator Ross Evelsizer, has also been to the capital twice to speak on behalf of WMAs. Coordinators will keep the board updated on any change to the Bill.

Iowa DNR Sign Grant 2024

The Iowa DNR has released their creek sign grant again for 2024. The grant is for up to \$10,000 to install creek name and/or watershed name signs along county roads. Coordinators discussed they have not pursued this yet again for this year but if counties were interested they would be willing to apply on their behalf. Dave Nuss, City of Sumner, explained how the creek signs installed last year

have made a huge impact on locals in the area. He specifically comments on impact of Watershed Boundary signs for the Turkey River WMA. Sherman Lundy, Black Hawk SWCD, commented that Black Hawk County was applying for another gran this year for creek signs.

- **Next Meeting Date:** Tori, will send out potential meeting dates for July, which will be our Annual Meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:09 Motion made by Dean Eastman, Second by Orlan Love. Motion Passed.

Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed 2023 Sampling Results

The Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority started water sampling with the help from partner organizations in 2015. Since then, samples were gathered in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019 through 2023. Due to lack of funding and volunteers no samples were collected during the 2018 season. In 2023, samples are collected twice a month during May and June (on the first and third Monday of the month) and once a month (on the third Monday) from July to October. Samples are gathered from 22 locations across the UWRW. This data provides a snapshot of the entire watershed on a given day each month and allows the comparison of one stream/watershed to the next. Water samples are collected on the same day by volunteers and members of private organizations including Iowa State Extension, NRCS, Linn County Conservation, Black Hawk County Health Department, Chickasaw County Conservation, and many more. Once samples are gathered they are packed on ice, and sent to the Coe College laboratory for analysis. The samples are analyzed for concentrations of E.coli Bacteria, Nitrate, Total Phosphate as P, Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus, Chloride, Sulfate, and Total Suspended Solids. Below is a summary of results from the 2023 sampling season.

Table 1. shows the average value for each sampling location in 2023. According to the EPA, Iowa's nitrate water quality standard for fish and water consumption is 10 mg/L as Nitrate-N. 2021 averages above 10mg/L for nitrate are shown in red. E. coli concentrations above 235CFU/100ml E. coli represents Iowa's single sample maximum water quality standard for primary contact recreational use. Majority of 2023 sampling location averaged above 253CFU/100ml. These values are also shown in red. E. coli bacteria as an indicator species continues to be a great concern for the UWR watershed. The EPA also recommends concentrations of total phosphorus to be less than 0.1mg/L to prevent excessive growth of aquatic plants in surface waters, which can lead to eutrophication. Phosphorus concentrations often directly correlates to sedimentation and erosion of soils into surface waters. All sampling sites in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed exceed this recommendation. Therefore, phosphorus and sedimentation are another major concern for the watershed.

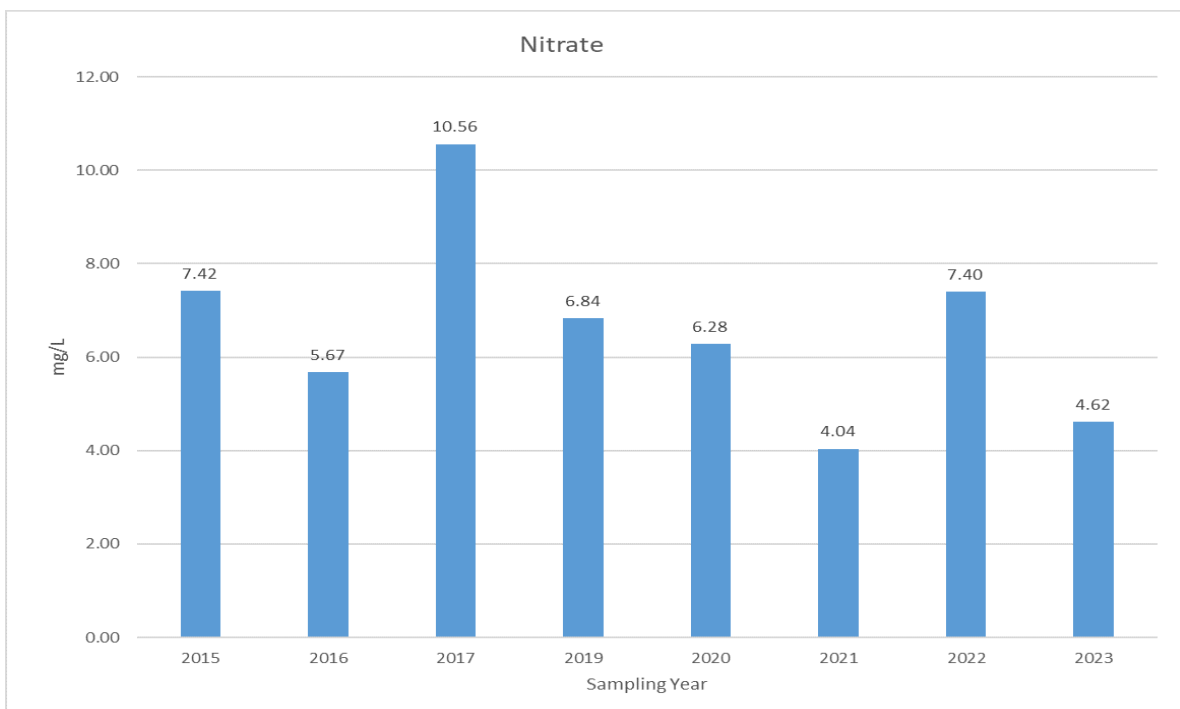
Table 1. 2023 sampling results for each sampling site.

Site	Subwatershed	TSS	DRP	CI	NO3-N	SO4	Ecoli	Total P
Black Hawk 12	Lower Crane Creek	10.55	0.16	33.18	2.97	22.77	518.50	0.44
Black hawk 13	Camp Creek-Wapsi River	17.45	0.11	20.02	3.44	19.98	131.13	0.30
Bremer 12A	Upper Crane Creek	13.95	0.12	26.89	3.95	18.56	1256.86	0.29
Bremer 14	Buck Creek	15.15	0.18	23.33	4.40	22.67	2187.00	0.27
Buchanan 15	Village of Fairbank-Little Wapsi River	6.45	0.16	21.00	4.21	30.64	374.63	0.29
Buchanan 18	Otter Creek	10.25	0.12	26.28	3.90	23.86	756.38	0.22
Buchanan 19	Pine Creek	17.50	0.12	16.60	5.92	22.88	770.25	0.14
Buchanan 20	Silver Creek-Buffalo Creek	6.40	0.10	17.49	4.00	23.11	535.50	0.19
Chickasaw 3	Mead Creek	26.53	0.24	15.00	5.63	23.63	645.00	0.51

Chickasaw 4	Elk Creek	22.24	0.10	19.24	6.34	10.54	973.00	0.18
Chickasaw 5	Village of Ionia-Wapsi River	38.68	0.18	22.70	4.34	17.05	470.13	0.44
Chickasaw 6	Spring Branch-Little Wapsi River	53.63	0.15	17.00	4.62	21.01	1039.00	0.53
Chickasaw 7	Middle East Branch Wapsi River	28.21	0.12	18.85	6.00	30.84	700.38	0.30
Delaware 21	Silver Creek-Buffalo Creek	3.20	0.13	23.04	9.11	19.84	835.75	0.15
Delaware 23	Nugents Creek-Buffalo Creek	5.35	0.39	29.47	8.71	20.50	1684.86	0.68
Linn 22	Walton Creek-Wapsi River	48.00	0.09	22.24	3.36	21.25	128.25	0.44
Linn 23	Nugents Creek-Buffalo Creek	21.80	0.05	22.12	3.36	21.55	90.57	0.39
Linn 24	Heatons Creek-Wapsi River	23.50	0.07	22.41	3.29	21.50	58.86	0.46
Linn 25	Crows Creek-Wapsi River	24.25	0.06	20.15	3.11	20.81	93.50	0.35
Linn 26	Crows Creek-Wapsi River	8.30	0.10	17.53	5.11	20.17	292.14	0.18

Table 2 shows the yearly average nitrate concentrations for the Chickasaw 6 sampling site in the Spring Branch Little Wapsi Watershed. The Site shows a very high level of nitrate in 2017 likely due to high levels of rain fall recorded during that year. The watershed and most parts of Iowa experienced drought conditions, which is reflected by a low Nitrate average. The data represents a small sample site, therefore, it is unrealistic to determine whether the water body is improving in water quality.

Table 2: Differences in Yearly Average of Nitrate Concentrations for Site Chickasaw 6.



Continued data collection over a wide spatial area of the UWR Watershed allows for a better understanding of the water quality problems in the Watershed, and allows landowners, citizens and organizations to find ways to solve the issues related to poor water quality. Extensive water monitoring data can result in increased funding for effective watershed projects, bringing tens of millions of dollars in state and federal cost share to help private landowners implement voluntary conservation practices, as well as funding for SWCDs and other organizations to hire conservation professionals, including technicians and engineers, to provide free technical assistance to watershed residents.

For more information on the 2022 sampling year, and other Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Sampling results go to <https://upperwapsi.org/plan/challenges-and-opportunities/water-quality/>.

Attachment A



The **UWRWMA Coordinator**, hired through Northeast Iowa RC&D will be responsible for the following tasks as time and funding allow.

Goal Amount: \$18,000/year

- **Task 1: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Quarterly and Annual Board Meetings**
 - Work with UWRWMA Board Chair to develop and distribute agendas, which are by law required to be publicly posted by members
 - Record and distribute UWRWMA Board minutes
 - Help the UWRWMA Board track and manage appointed representatives, reappointments, and contact information
- **Task 2: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Executive Committee and Other Committee Meetings as Assigned**
- **Task 3: Support and Represent the UWRWMA Board at Statewide Meetings and Conferences**
 - Prepare and provide supporting materials and presentations for UWRWMA Board members as needed
 - Attend and present on behalf of the UWRWMA Board as needed
 - Attend meetings as the UWRWMA Coordinator: WMA Coordinators from all Iowa WMAs are asked to attend and report or present at *WMAs of Iowa* meetings and Iowa DNR statewide WMA meetings (the WMA Coordinator is a designated voting member)
 - Attend and present as needed at other statewide meetings held by partners, including but not limited to meetings of potential funders for WMAs, SWCDs, cities and counties.
 - Attend and present at other conferences (Conference organizers who bring together our partner entities such as ISAC, Iowa League of Cities, Iowa Water Conference, etc., have asked us to develop presentations and present at their conferences.)
- **Task 4: Website Maintenance for www.upperwapsi.org, the UWRWMA's Main Communication Method**
 - Post agendas and minutes, news and events relevant to the UWRWMA or Iowa WMAs
 - Maintain website functionality and update data and maps as needed
- **Task 5 Grant Identification (up to 2 per year)**
 - Research and identify grants that fit priorities of the UWRWMA Board as detailed in the Resiliency Plan
 - Maintain a Data Base of potential grants for the UWRWMA Board
 - Distribute information about potential grants to the WMA members at WMA Board meetings
 - Work with UWRWMA Board and/or committees to identify specific priority grants
- **Task 6 Grant Proposal Development and Coordination**
 - Work with the UWRWMA Executive Committee to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
 - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
 - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
 - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means
- **Task 7: Coordinate Yearly Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed water sampling efforts**
 - Includes cost of analysis for 21 sampling sites throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed
 - Work with UWRWMA Partners in each county to continue water sampling efforts by organizing volunteers
 - Develop a yearly water quality report from water sampling data results
 - Update water quality database on the Upper Wapsi WMA website.
- **Task 8: Grant Proposal Development for Member Entities (up to 3 per year)**
 - Work with the UWRWMA member entities to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
 - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
 - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
 - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means

Note: Competing grant applications from WMA member entities will be prioritized by the WMA board

• **Task 9: Coordinate Watershed Outreach**

- Develop presentations, and promotional materials for distribution by WMA Members and Watershed Coordinator
- Develop a Quarterly Newsletter that outlines WMA tasks, watershed news and up-coming events.
- Attend City Council, Commissioner, and Supervisor meetings as requested to inform WMA member entities about WMA activities, implementation progress and partnership opportunities.
- Work with the WMA board to design, determine location and develop a funding strategy for watershed boundary signage throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed.

