MEMBERS PRESENT:
Greg Anderson, Isanti County
Tom Appel, Cottonwood County
Duane Bakke, Fillmore County
Anton Berg, Brown County
Charlie Borrell, Wright County
Myron Bursheim, Cook County
Drew Campbell, Blue Earth County
James Eigenberg, Jackson County
Joe Fox, Swift County
Tim Gabrielson, Mower County
Paul Gerde, Pope County
Peter Hoff, Grant County
Chuck Horsager, Wadena County
Gerald Jacobson, Polk County
Frank Jewell, St. Louis County
Luke Johnson, Pipestone County
Todd Johnson, Traverse County
Glenn Kluis, Murray County
Randy Kramer, Renville County
Doug Krueger, McLeod County

Tom Loveall, Faribault County
Harland Madsen, Kandiyohi County
Anne Marcotte, Aitkin County
Vern Massie, Hubbard County
Michele McPherson, Mille Lacs County
Barry Nelson, Becker County
Steve Notch, Stearns County
Leon Olson, Kittson County
Gary Peterson, Carlton County
Neil Peterson, Pennington County
Edward Popp, Benton County
Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County
Kathy Smith, Martin County
Ron Staples, Stevens County
James Stratton, Douglas County
Timothy Sumner, Beltrami County
Rich Sve, Lake County
Paul Thiede, Crow Wing County
Russell Walker, Roseau County

GUESTS:
Bruce Messelt, Chisago County Administrator
Jeff Travis, Washington County Public Health
Kate Eiynck, Goodhue County Land Use Mgmt
Steve Woods, Freshwater Society
John Helmers, Olmsted County Environmental Services Director, SWAA
Les Lemm, BWSR

Rocky Sisk, MPCA
Tom Gile, BWSR
Luke Steuwe, MDA
Kirk Titus, Cass Co. Land Commissioner
Chris Pence, Crow Wing County Land Services
Nancy Daubenberger, MnDOT

I. Call Joint Meeting to Order
Chairs Barry Nelson and Mike Potter called the Joint Committee on Environment & Natural Resources and Transportation & Infrastructure meeting to order at 1:35 PM and welcomed members and guests. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
III. **Update on Roadside Ditch Mowing**
Nancy Daubenberger, MnDOT Assistant Commissioner, provided an update to committee members on MnDOT policies and procedures for mowing and grazing in state highway right-of-way areas.

IV. **State Assumption of Section 404 Permit Program and Local Road Wetland Replacement Program Updates**
Les Lemm, BWSR Wetlands Section Manager, provided an overview of the 2016 report examining state assumption of the federal section 404 permit program, as well as an update on the current status of seeking state assumption. He also provided the committees with an update on the status of the Local Road Wetland Replacement Program and wetland credits available in bank service areas throughout the state.

V. **Update on Volkswagen Settlement**
Rocky Sisk, MPCA, provided an overview of the Volkswagen Settlement and described how the state of Minnesota and its residents could be eligible for funding to replace large diesel vehicles and equipment (including counties and other local units of government).

VI. **Adjourn Joint Committee**
The Joint Committee adjourned at 2:55 PM.

VII. **Call Meeting to Order**
Chair Nelson called the Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee to order at 3:00 PM. Commissioner Duane Bakke made a motion to approve the February 16, 2017 minutes. Commissioner Luke Johnson seconded the motion. The motion prevailed and the minutes were adopted.

VIII. **Buffer Enforcement Update**
Tom Gile, BWSR Buffer and Soil Loss Coordinator, provided an update on counties and watershed districts who have elected jurisdiction for enforcing the Minnesota Buffer Law and provided information regarding timelines, requirements for county ordinances and uses for the funding.

IX. **Draft Nitrogen Fertilizer Rule Update**
Luke Stuewe, Hydrologist with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, provided an overview and update of the MDA rulemaking process for nitrogen fertilizer application, including sharing data and maps of the areas sensitive to groundwater contamination.

X. **Consideration of Groundwater Recharge Proposal**
Steve Woods, Freshwater Society, presented a policy idea pertaining to groundwater recharge and asked for members to support an addition to the AMC Platform that would include groundwater quantity as a priority, in addition to quality, which is already in the platform.

XI. **Affiliate Group Presentations on Legislative Priorities**
Jeff Travis, Washington County Public Health Program Manager, presented on behalf of the Local Public Health Association (LPHA) and provided an overview of the goals of their organization and environmental health priorities.
Kirk Titus, Cass County Land Commissioner, presented the 2018 legislative priorities on behalf of the Minnesota Association of County Land Commissioners (MACLC). Their priorities include: sealed bids for land sales, blighted tax forfeit property relief fund, sustaining PILT and sustaining the Forest Road Maintenance Account.

Chris Pence, Crow Wing County Land Services Supervisor, presented the 2018 legislative priorities on behalf of the Minnesota Association of County Planning and Zoning Administrators (MACPZA). Their priorities include: state funding for state-wide aggregate mapping, Natural Resources Block Grants to be distributed from the Department of Revenue rather than BWSR, and support to the DNR for establishing ordinary high water and 100 year flood elevations on public waters.

XII. Adjourn for the Day
There was a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting for the day. The Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee adjourned at 4:30 PM.

XIII. Call Meeting to Order
Chair Nelson called the Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee to order at 8:30 AM. The committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

XIV. Continued Affiliate Group Presentations on Legislative Priorities
Jennifer Berquam, AMC Policy Analyst, shared the 2018 priorities on behalf of the Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers (MACFO). These priorities include: increased state funding for the county feedlot program, concerns with the proposed MPCA water fee increases and LCCMR funding to develop an online training curriculum with the University of MN – Extension.

John Helmers, Olmsted County Environmental Resources Director, presented the 2018 priorities on behalf of the Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA). These priorities include permitting for demolition landfills and sustaining the Capital Assistance Program for solid waste facilities. John also shared two new platform items that will be considered by the SWAA organization pertaining to legislation that limits the ability of counties to fulfill their waste management responsibilities and coordinated statewide market development for recovered materials.

Betsy Hammer, Executive Director of the Minnesota Resource Recovery Association and AMC staff member, presented the legislative priorities of the Minnesota Resource Recovery Association.

Commissioner Drew Campbell invited committee members to attend the Community Health Conference at Breezy Point at the end of September.

XV. AMC Work Group Updates
Chair Barry Nelson provided the committee with an update on the purpose and discussions thus far for the AMC-SWCD Joint Work Group. The Committee briefly discussed county-SWCD relationships and funding issues. The Work Group will conclude its work prior to the next ENRPC meeting and a report/policy recommendation will be provided to the committee at that time.
Vice Chair Randy Kramer provided the committee with an update on the purpose and discussions/presentations thus far for the AMC Public Lands Management Work Group. Members briefly discussed public lands issues including land valuations, unintentional consequences and inadequate management of lands currently owned by the state or federal government. The work group will conclude its work prior to the next ENRPC meeting and a report/policy recommendations will be provided to the committee at that time.

XVI. 2018 Platform Discussion

Commissioner Tom Loveall discussed a policy idea with the committee pertaining to drainage, redetermination of benefits processes and ditch viewing. The information was provided for discussion purposes only and the Drainage Work Group (DWG) will be examining the policy idea further. Depending on discussions at the DWG, a proposal may come forward at the December policy committee meeting for consideration.

Jennifer Berquam explained the platform review process and recommended two technical changes to the platform:

1. **Add item to “Land Use Planning and Regulation” from “PILT” section of platform:** Private lands acquired outside of a city should not be in conflict with the county’s comprehensive plan.

   Commissioner Rich Sve moved to support this change. The motion was seconded by Mille Lacs County Land Services Director Michele McPherson. **Motion carried.**

2. **Remove item under “Land Use Planning and Regulation” that was accomplished last session:** Current Minnesota Statute prohibits, in cities and townships, the recording of land transfers where the parcels/lots do not comply with adopted subdivision regulations. AMC supports amending Statute with similar language that would provide Counties the same authority of subdivision review and approval prior to the recording of land transfers to ensure that resulting lots are in compliance with County standards.

   Commissioner Luke Johnson moved to strike this language. Commissioner Harlan Madsen seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Chair Nelson asked for platform recommendations from committee members:

3. Commissioner Gary Peterson raised a concern pertaining to the management of beaver, associated damage to public and private property and a policy idea for state financial assistance. The committee discussed issues relating to beaver management.

   **Commissioner Gary Peterson made a motion for AMC Staff to research previous legislation/law providing a state-county funding mechanism for beaver management and to draft language for a platform item relating to this for consideration at the December ENRPC meeting.** Commissioner Drew Campbell seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

4. John Ongaro, St. Louis County staff, led a discussion on PILT reductions due to reduced land valuations. He discussed a few options to address the long-term stability of PILT (reduce peaks and valleys) on acquired acres. He will be seeking input from the AMC Public Lands Management Work Group and will discuss the issue with the AMC General Government
Committee who has jurisdiction over taxing issues. This information was provided for discussion purposes only.

5. The ENRPC discussed public lands issues and will wait to hear recommendations from the Public Lands Management Work Group at the December meeting before making any recommended changes to the AMC Platform.

6. The committee discussed SWCD funding issues and will wait to hear recommendations from the AMC-SWCD Work Group at the December ENRPC meeting before making any recommended changes to the AMC Platform.

7. Commissioner Duane Bakke raised an issue pertaining to the MPCA not enforcing violations of SSTS laws. The committee discussed the issue. **Commissioner Rich Sve made a motion directing AMC staff to work with Commissioner Bakke on platform language to recommend to the ENRPC at the December policy committee meeting. Commissioner Anne Marcotte seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

8. Commissioner Anne Marcotte raised an issue pertaining to blight on tax forfeited lands and the expense for counties to clean up the sites. The committee discussed the issue (this item was part of the Minnesota Association of County Land Commissioners presentation on their 2018 legislative priorities). **Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt made a motion to support the legislative priorities presented by the affiliates at the 2017 AMC Fall Policy Conference, September 14-15, 2017 (these affiliates include: LPHA, MACLC, MACPZA, MACFO, SWAA and MRRA). Commissioner Luke Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

9. The committee discussed the request from the Freshwater Society to include groundwater quantity as a priority in addition to groundwater quality, which is already included in the AMC Platform. The committee discussed the addition and opted not to add groundwater quantity, and would like further information, such as how the recharge would occur and more specifics on how water quantity would be defined.

10. AMC staff, Jennifer Berquam, mentioned a request from the MDA Noxious Weeds Advisory Group to support state funding for county agricultural inspectors. The committee did not wish to act on this request.

11. The committee discussed the shortage of wetland credits needed by counties for road projects and exploring other options for state-owned credits. The committee was open to exploring other options but did not ask for a new platform item at this time.

12. Commissioner Randy Kramer raised a concern pertaining to delays for buffer requirements on public ditches. The committee directed AMC staff to look into the issue but did not act on making recommended changes to the platform.
XVII. 2018 ENRPC Priorities Discussion and Selection

The committee discussed priorities to consider for 2018 and identified the following seven items (the committee can have no more than 5 priority recommendations):

1. Pursue alternatives for generating more state-owned wetland credits (the policy idea was discussed and language will be developed by AMC staff in the form of a policy platform to be considered by the committee at the December policy meeting).

2. In order to help maintain the tax base, AMC supports a policy that any acquisition or exchange of land by the state or federal government must gain approval of the county board. This includes lands acquired through purchase, environmental land trust, gifting or other means (current platform item).

3. AMC supports requiring federal and state agencies to formally notify and solicit county input prior to all proposed land acquisitions (current platform item).

4. AMC supports the use of crushed glass in the construction of roads and in the construction and operation of MSSW landfills; this use is considered recycling and included in SCORE goals (current platform item).

5. State funding for tax-forfeited, blighted lands (the policy idea was discussed and language will be developed by AMC staff in the form of a policy platform to be considered by the committee at the December policy meeting).

6. AMC supports maximizing the collection and safe disposal of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medicines through an internalized pharmaceutical manufacturer financing mechanism that covers the costs of collection, transportation and hazardous waste disposal, and that does not rely on state and local government funding (current platform item).

7. AMC supports more effective laws to reduce the frequency and severity of accidental dog trapping incidents (current platform item).

The committee discussed the seven items listed above and began the process to formally adopt no more than 5 priority recommendations.

- Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt withdraw her recommendation, #6 from above, pertaining to disposal of medicines.
- Commissioner Anne Marcotte withdrew her recommendation for state funding for tax forfeited, blighted lands (#5 from above).
- Commissioner Luke Johnson moved to select pursuing alternatives for generating more state-owned wetland credits (for mitigation needs during county road projects) as a priority of the committee and directed AMC staff to draft language for the committee to consider at the December ENRPC meeting. Michele McPherson seconded the motion. Motion carried.
• Commissioner Randy Kramer moved to select number 2 above as a priority of the committee. Commissioner Gerald Jacobson seconded the motion. The chair asked members in favor of the motion to raise their hand – 14 in support. The chair asked members in opposition of the motion to raise their hand – 13 in opposition. The chair voted no. **Motion did not prevail.**

• Commissioner Joe Fox moved to select number 3 from above as a priority of the committee. Commissioner Ron Staples seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

• Commissioner Anton Berg made a motion to select number 4 from above as a priority of the committee. Commissioner Dwayne Bakke seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

• Commissioner Todd Johnson moved to select number 7 from above as a priority of the committee. Commissioner Harlan Madsen seconded the motion. The chair asked members in support of the motion to raise their hand – 11 in support. The chair asked members in opposition to the motion to raise their hand – 13 in opposition. **Motion did not prevail.**

Three of the original seven items were selected by the committee as priority items.

• Commissioner Anne Marcotte made a motion for the committee to reconsider adding state funding for tax forfeited, blighted properties as a priority and directed AMC staff to draft language for the committee to consider adding to the platform at the December meeting. Commissioner Luke Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

• Commissioner Ron Staples made a motion for the committee to consider a priority item from last year to carry over to 2018 priorities pertaining to the permitting of demolition landfills. Commissioner Vern Massie seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

The five priorities selected by the ENRPC for 2018 are:

• Pursue alternatives for generating more state-owned wetland credits (the policy idea was discussed and language will be developed by AMC staff in the form of a policy platform to be considered by the committee at the December policy meeting).

• AMC supports requiring federal and state agencies to formally notify and solicit county input prior to all proposed land acquisitions.

• AMC supports the use of crushed glass in the construction of roads and in the construction and operation of MSW landfills; this use is considered recycling and included in SCORE goals.

• State funding for tax-forfeited, blighted lands (the policy idea was discussed and language will be developed by AMC staff in the form of a policy platform to be considered by the committee at the December policy meeting).

• AMC supports requiring the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to issue, and/or reissue, all demolition land disposal facility permits in accordance with the MPCA’s 2005 Guidance Document until such guidelines are otherwise modified by new Rule or Statute.
XVIII. Adjourn
A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee adjourned at 11:40 AM.